

RESTRICTED

23979

AUG 31 1943

PEXO 201-Aguirre, Richard U.

Wrapper Ind.

HQ, UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES IN THE FAR EAST, APO 501, 23 August, 1943.

TO: Effects Quartermaster, Kansas City Quartermaster Depot, Kansas City, Mo.

Inclosed Inventory of Effects in the case of Second Lieutenant Richard U. Aguirre, 0733398, 64th Bomb Squadron, 43rd Bomb Group, who has been missing in action since 21 May, 1943.

For the Commanding General:

No Casualty Report

B. B. Russell

B. B. RUSSELL,

Major, A. G. D.,

Ass't Adjutant General.

1 Incl:

Inventory of Effects

RESTRICTED

Effect of Man Missing in Action

Richard V. Aguirre, 2nd Lt. 64th Bomb Sq. (H).

0-733398

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1- Navigators Watch | 1- leather folder |
| 1- shirt - sharp stain | 1- box misc. items |
| 2- V Pink trousers | |
| 1- wool O.D. | |
| 2- shirts green | |
| 2- green trousers | |
| 1- shirt wool O.D. | |
| 1- shirt pink | |
| 1- shirt wool | |
| 1- blouse w/ insignias | |
| 1- tie | |
| 1- key case | |
| 3- flight cap CKA. | |
| 2- " " green | |
| 1- razor | |
| 1- pr. wings | |
| 4- photos | |
| 1- pen knife (missing) | |
| 1- pipe | |
| 1- tobacco pouch | |
| 1- service cap | |
- file
J.M.

23979

February 16, 1944
1321 East Union Street
Seattle 22, Washington

Effects Quartermaster,
Kansas City,
Missouri

Dear Sir;

Would you please tell me where I could find out about my husbands personel belongings that I understood were to be sent to me at the end of six months after he was reported "Missing in Action" in the Southwest Pacific Area?

His name is "Lt. Richard U. Aguirre
46th Bombardment Group
64th Squadron (H)
Serial No. 0733398
APO 929
%Postmaster, S.F. California"

He has been missing since May 21st, 1943 and I would like to keep his personel belongings for him until he returns. I understand he has been awarded five (5) medals too, could you tell me if they too will be sent to me?

Sincerely yours,

Mrs Richard U. Aguirre

*mail file
MM
2-4-44*

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
KANSAS CITY QUARTERMASTER DEPO
601 Hardesty Avenue
Kansas City 1, Missouri

100
(S-26 Apr 44)
JRM:MIM:lb
26 February 1944

IN REPLY REFER TO: QM 201 (23979)

SUBJECT: Request for Report of Status of 2nd Lt. Richard U. Aguirre.

TO : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D. C.

1. It is requested that the Army Effects Bureau be informed whether Richard U. Aguirre, O-733398, 2nd Lt. AC is carried on your records as deceased or missing in action.

2. It also is requested that this Bureau be furnished the name, address, and relationship of his beneficiary, alternate beneficiary, nearest relative, and the bailee designated to receive his lost or mislaid property.

For the Commanding Officer:

W. F. Heeman
W. F. HEEMAN
Major Q.M.C.
Asst. Effects Quartermaster

(23979)

(S-26 Apr 44)
JRM:MM:lb
26 February 1944

of 2nd Lt. Richard U. Aguirre.

Richard U. Aguirre, O-739398, 2nd Lt. AO

W. F. HEIRMAN
Major C.M.C.
Asst. Effects Quartermaster

68

IN THE OFFICE OF THE

RECEIVED

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ARMY SERVICE FORCES
KANSAS CITY QUARTERMASTER DEPOT
601 HARDESTY AVENUE
KANSAS CITY 1, MISSOURI

(S-4-6-14)
JRM:MM:1b
March 6, 1944

IN REPLY REFER TO 33979 11

Mrs. Richard U. Aguirre
1921 East Union Street
Seattle 22, Washington

Dear Mrs. Aguirre:

This refers to your letter of February 16 inquiring about the personal effects of your husband, Second Lieutenant Richard U. Aguirre.

The Army Effects Bureau has just received certain property of Lieutenant Aguirre; however, existing instructions require that we request certain information before making shipment of such property. If you have any letter or other written instrument from your husband indicating with whom he would want his belongings stored, I wish you would forward such paper to me. After examining it, I will return it promptly. I will appreciate it if you will also be so kind as to give me the following information and any other which you deem important:

1. What are the names and addresses of his closest relatives; i.e., oldest adult child, father, mother, oldest brother, oldest sister, et cetera?
2. What is the name, address and relationship of the person with whom you feel that he would want his things stored?
3. Would you personally be willing to receive, receipt for, and safely keep and store his property as a gratuitous bailee?
4. If the property is delivered to you, will you agree to return it to him, his personal representative or the Army Effects Bureau upon request?

Your assistance in furnishing the above information will be most helpful to us, and very much appreciated.

For your convenience in replying, there is inclosed an addressed envelope which requires no postage.

Yours very truly,

E. A. CUNNINGHAM
1st Lt. Q.M.C.
Assistant

1 Incl--Envelope

23979

AG 201 Aguirre, Richard U.
(26 Feb 44) PC-G

1st Ind.

HMC

Hq., ASF., AGO., Washington 25, D. C., 4 March 1944.

To: Effects Quartermaster, Kansas City Quartermaster Depot, Kansas City 1, Missouri.

Second Lieutenant Richard U. Aguirre, O-733398, who has been missing in action since 21 May 1943 in the Southwest Pacific Area, designated the following:

BENEFICIARY:

Mrs. Richard Aguirre, wife,
Box 517,
Mountain Home, Idaho.

ALTERNATE BENEFICIARIES:

Mr. Domingo Aguirre, father,
Box 517,
Mountain Home, Idaho.

Mrs. Juanita Aguirre, Mother,
Box 517,
Mountain Home, Idaho.

NEAREST RELATIVE:

Mr. Domingo Aguirre, father,
Box 517,
Mountain Home, Idaho.

BAILEE:

Mrs. Margaret A. Aguirre, wife,
Box 517,
Mountain Home, Idaho.

By Command of Lieutenant General SOMERVELL:

Harold Stubel

Adjutant General.

*file
mm*

his money, nearly \$500.⁰⁰, &
 had planned to send it to me to take
 care of doctor & hospital expenses for
 our baby. He may have given it to
 the C.O. for safe keeping or he might
 have been carrying it on his person.
 Should you know anything about it?

Thank you for your time
 & help & I hope to receive Dick's things
 soon.

Sincerely,

Mrs Richard W. Aguirre

Ing re money \$570.⁰⁰
 + medals

file
 am

1- His family, Mr & Mrs Domingo Aguirre and his two brothers Domingo & Felix live in Mountain Home Idaho.

2- I know he would want me as well as his daughter to keep his things for him. Our address is

Mrs Richard H. Aguirre & Dicki Ann
1321 East Union Street
Seattle 22, Washington
Telephone Prospect 2511

3. I will be glad to receive, receipt for, & personally keep & store his property as a gratuitous bailer.

4. If I receive his property I will agree to return it to him or the Army Effects Bureau upon request.

During the time he was over there he mentioned having received some medals for things done. Should they have been sent to you? He also mentioned that he had been saving

23979

1321 E. Union

Seattle 22, Washington

March 11, 1944

IMMEDIATE ACTION

Dear Lt. Cunningham.

I received your answer to my letter of February 14th inquiring about the personal effects of my husband Second Lieutenant Richard W. Aguirre & shall try & answer your questions.

I received one particular letter from husband stating that if anything anything should ever happen to him his personal effects & medals would be sent to me to keep along with his other things until he returned, and I know he will someday, but that letter has been stowed away with our other things & it would be difficult to find at the moment but if necessary I will try & find it for you.

I want to keep his things for him and if he doesn't return, I want our daughter who is now six months old whom he has never seen to have them someday. I know he would want me to be the one to keep them for him.

file

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
KANSAS CITY QUARTERMASTER DEPOT
601 Hardesty Avenue
Kansas City 1, Missouri

fr:lb

In the matter of the disposition
of the personal property of:

Case No. 23979 H

2nd Lt. Richard U. Aguirre
(Name of missing soldier)

RECEIPT FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY
DELIVERED TO BAILEE BY ARMY EFFECTS
BUREAU

0-733398

(Serial Number)

(S-4-23-44)

I hereby acknowledge that I have received from the Army Effects
Bureau, Kansas City, Missouri, for safe-keeping, the following personal
property of the above-named officer or soldier:

No.	Articles	No.	Articles
6	Pr. Trousers	1	Tobacco pouch
6	Shirts	1	Folder
1	Blouse w/wings & insignia	1	Watch, Navigator's
6	Caps	1	Folder personal papers
	Photo & snapshots	1	Notebook
1	Tie	1	Box with miscellaneous items
1	Key case		
1	Razor		
1	Pr. wings		
2	Pipes		

File new

I agree to safely keep and store the above-listed personal property
pending the return of said officer or soldier, and to deliver the same to
him or to the Army Effects Bureau, Kansas City, Missouri, upon demand. I
further agree, in the event the above-named officer or soldier subsequently
becomes a casualty, to turn said property over to the person or persons
legally entitled by law to receive the same.

Subscribed at Seattle Washington on this 30th day of
(City, town or village and state)

March, 19 44.

Witnessed by:

[Signature]
(Signature of witness)

[Signature]
(Signature of bailee in ink)

1403 W. 45th St.

(Address)

1321 E. Union St.

(Address)

File new

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
ARMY EFFECTS BUREAU

ORDER FOR SHIPMENT

1b

MAR 22 1944

Suspense 1 Apr 44

Case No. 23979 M

Date 18 March 1944

MEMORANDUM TO Warehouse Branch:

Please see that the personal effects on the above mentioned case are packed, weighed and ready for shipment promptly so that they may be readily picked up. Bills of Lading and all other papers will be marked with the case number and can be identified thereby. The original of this form should be returned to the Administrative Branch after completion.

Effects of: Second Lieutenant Richard U. Aguirre Serial No. 0-733398

Ship to: Mrs. Richard U. Aguirre

Street and Number 1321 East Union Street

City and State Seattle 22, Washington

Ship Via: Parcel Post Gov't B/L No.

For the Effects Quartermaster

LIST OF PACKAGES SHIPPED

1 Carton

Franked Mail--~~4~~ or less

Parcel Post Charges

3.20

Estimated Express Charges

3.51

Estimated Freight Charges

3.72

Total Number of Pieces: 1

Weight of Shipment: 35 #

Shipping Clerk

Date MAR 21 1944

DS:jeb

Effects QM Form 14 (Rev. 10/15/43)

SPQDK 332.3

JHM:NM:msl
20 April 1944

SUBJECT: Disposal of personal effects

TO: : The Quartermaster General, Memorial Branch, Washington 25, D. C.

There are transmitted herewith certified copies of receipts executed by bailees for personal property of the following-named personnel, reported missing in action.

<u>CASE NO.</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>SERIAL NO.</u>	<u>BAILLEE</u>
12189	Pugh, Ernest L.	Sgt.	6947173	Dorothy P. Pugh (wife)
<u>23979</u>	<u>Aguirre, Richard U.</u>	2nd Lt.	0-733398	Margaret Aguirre (wife)
37576	Clark III, Frank H.	2nd Lt.	0-661708	Bertha Clark (mother)
44794	Nixon, Claude E.	S/Sgt.	38114201	Wile B. Nixon (father)
46889	Erb, Charles E.	2nd Lt.	0-737753	Janet Erb (wife)

For the Effects Quartermaster:

G. H. GALVIN, JR.
1st Lt. Q.M.C.
Chief, Adm. Control Branch

5 Incls--Receipts

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
KANSAS CITY QUARTERMASTER DEPOT
601 HARDESTY AVENUE
KANSAS CITY 1, MISSOURI

(S-4-23-44)
JRM:MM:fr
March 23, 1944

IN REPLY REFER TO 23979 M

Mrs. Richard U. Aguirre
1321 East Union Street
Seattle 22, Washington

Dear Mrs. Aguirre:

Thank you for the information furnished in your letter of March 11 in connection with the disposal of the personal property of your husband, Second Lieutenant Richard U. Aguirre.

No medals were included in the effects of Lieutenant Aguirre which were received at this Bureau. All the property of your husband which has arrived here to date has been sent to you at the above address by parcel post.

We have no information concerning any additional money which your husband may have had. It is possible that the \$500 mentioned by Lieutenant Aguirre in the letter to you represents money deposited in Soldier's Savings. I would, therefore, suggest that you direct an inquiry to The Fiscal Director, Army Service Forces, Washington, D. C., for information relating to this sum.

My action in forwarding this property does not, of itself, vest legal title in you. I transmit these items only that you may act as gratuitous bailee in caring for them until the return of the owner. In the event he is reported as a casualty, and I sincerely hope he never is, it will be necessary that the property be turned over to the person or persons legally entitled to receive the same.

When you have received the package, I will appreciate your signing one copy of the inclosed receipt, indicating that you will act in the capacity stated, and returning it to this Bureau.

Your cooperation in this matter will be most helpful to us. For your convenience, there is inclosed an addressed envelope which requires no postage.

Yours very truly,

R. E. RODGERS
2nd Lt. Q.M.C.
Assistant

2 Incls
Receipt (in dup.)
Envelope

23979

JRM:DW:men
March 5, 1945

Mrs. Richard U. Aguirre
1321 East Union Street
Seattle 22, Washington

Dear Mrs. Aguirre:

Since our previous correspondence with you, the Army Effects Bureau has received additional property of your husband, Second Lieutenant Richard U. Aguirre, consisting of a flight record.

This record is transmitted herewith.

Yours very truly,

P. L. KOOB
2nd Lt. Q.M.C.
Chief, Correspondence Branch

1 Incl--Flight Record

SCREENED

5-13-48 wa

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
KANSAS CITY QUARTERMASTER DEPOT
601 Hardesty Avenue
Kansas City 1, Missouri

fr:lb

In the matter of the disposition)
of the personal property of:)

Case No. 23979 M

293 Richard U. Aguirre

(2nd Lt.) Richard U. Aguirre
(Name of missing soldier)

RECEIPT FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY
DELIVERED TO BAILEE BY ARMY EFFECTS
BUREAU

0-733398

(Serial Number)

(S-4-23-44)

I hereby acknowledge that I have received from the Army Effects Bureau, Kansas City, Missouri, for safe-keeping, the following personal property of the above-named officer or soldier:

No.	Articles	No.	Articles
6	Pr. Trousers	1	Tobacco pouch
6	Shirts	1	Folder
1	Blouse w/wings & insignia	1	Watch, Navigator's
6	Caps	1	Folder personal papers
	Photo & snapshots	1	Notebook
1	Tie	1	Box with miscellaneous items
1	Key case		
1	Razor		
1	Pr. wings		
2	Pipes		

I agree to safely keep and store the above-listed personal property pending the return of said officer or soldier, and to deliver the same to him or to the Army Effects Bureau, Kansas City, Missouri, upon demand. I further agree, in the event the above-named officer or soldier subsequently becomes a casualty, to turn said property over to the person or persons legally entitled by law to receive the same.

Subscribed at Seattle Washington on this 30th day of
(City, town or village and state)

March, 19 44.

Witnessed by:

J. O. Hay
(Signature of witness)

Mrs. Margaret Aguirre
(Signature of bailee in ink)

1403 W. 45th St.

(Address)

Certified a true copy

1321 E. Union St.

(Address)

T:ml

f QM Form 203

R. E. RODGERS

2nd Lt.

WAR DEPARTMENT
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

REPORT OF DEATH

DATE 22 April 1944
BSP /4627

FILE NAME <u>Aguirre, Richard U.</u>				ARMY SERIAL NUMBER <u>0-733 398</u>		GRADE <u>2nd Lt.</u>							
HOME ADDRESS <u>Mountain Home, Idaho</u>				ARM OR SERVICE <u>Air Corps</u>		DATE OF BIRTH <u>24 Mar 19</u>							
PLACE OF DEATH <u>Southwest Pacific Area</u>			CAUSE OF DEATH <u>Killed in Action</u>			DATE OF DEATH <u>21 May 43</u>							
STATION OF DECEASED <u>Southwest Pacific Area</u>				DATE OF ENTRY ON CURRENT ACTIVE SERVICE <u>21 Nov 42</u>		LENGTH OF SERVICE FOR PAY PURPOSES YEARS MONTHS DAYS							
EMERGENCY ADDRESSEE (NAME, RELATIONSHIP & ADDRESS) <u>Mrs. Margaret A. Aguirre, wife, 1321 East Union, Seattle, Washington</u>													
BENEFICIARY (NAME, RELATIONSHIP & ADDRESS) <u>Mrs. Richard Aguirre, (Margaret Ann) address shown above. (WIFE)</u> <u>Mr. Domingo Aguirre, father, Box 517 Mountain Home, Idaho.</u> <u>Mrs. Juanita Aguirre, mother, same address as father.</u>													
INVESTIGATION MADE?		IN LINE OF DUTY		OWN MISCONDUCT		WAS DECEASED ON DUTY STATUS		AUTHORIZED ABSENCE		IN FLYING PAY STATUS		OTHER PAY STATUS (SPECIFY BELOW)	
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
<u>X</u>		<u>X</u>		<u>X</u>		<u>X</u>		<u>X</u>		<u>X</u>			

ADDITIONAL DATA AND/OR STATEMENT

The individual named in this report is shown by the records of the War Department to have been absent in a missing in action status on and subsequent to 21 May 43 and until such absence was terminated by the receipt in the War Department of evidence of death transmitted by the Commanding General, Southwest Pacific Area, date of said termination being 1 Apr 44.

RECEIVED
MEMORIAL DIVISION
APR 24 4 42 PM '44

File
MAY 12 1944
Jy

COPIES FURNISHED:		
S. G. O.	F. B. I.	F. O., U. S. A., WASH., D. C.
G. A. O.	VET. ADMIN.	ARMY EFFECTS BUREAU
<u>G. M. G.</u>	OFF. FIS. DIR.	

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

Battle

J. W. Reinhardt.

ADJUTANT GENERAL

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

SIXTY FOURTH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
OFFICE OF THE SQUADRON COMMANDER

APO #929
22 May, 1943

SUBJECT: Casualty report per Memo #50, Hq, 5th A.F., 25 March '43.

TO : Commanding Officer, 43rd Bombardment GP (H), APO #929.

Under the provisions of Memorandum #50, Hq, Fifth Air Force, dated 25 March, 1943, the following casualty report is submitted.

* * * *

- III. 1. Richard U. Aguirre, 2nd Lieut., O-733398, 64th Bomb Sq (H), One Love.
2. Baker.
3. Vicinity of Rabaul
4. Flying status - Yes
5. \$349.50
6. Margaret Ann Aguirre, Wife, Box #517, Mountain Home, Idaho.
7. Board of officers not required.

* * * *

/s/ Arthur T. Curren
/t/ ARTHUR T. CURREN,
1st Lieut., Air Corps,
Actg Squadron Commander.

TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

James C. Carey
JAMES C. CAREY,
Captain, Air Corps,
Exec. Officer.

Incl #1

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

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

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES IN THE FAR EAST

A.P.O. 501,
20 February, 1944.

FEXC 704.5 (20 Feb 44)

SUBJECT: Change in Casualty Status.

TO : Commanding General, Fifth Air Force, A.P.O. 925.

1. Status of following personnel has been changed from "Missing in Action as of 21 May, 1943" to "Killed in Action on 21 May, 1943" based on statement of Master Sergeant Gordon R. Manuel, 13023327, 64th Bomb Squadron, 43rd Bomb Group, which was attached as an inclosure to your letter dated 18 February, 1944, file AG 704.5, subject: "Change of Casualty Status":

* * * *

AGUIRRE, Richard U. 2nd Lt O-733398

* * * *

2. Desire all pertinent records be amended to correspond.

By command of General MacARTHUR:

/s/ C. J. Engle
/t/ C. J. ENGLE,
Major, A. G. C.,
Ass't Adjutant General.

TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

James C. Carey
JAMES C. CAREY,
Captain, Air Corps,
Exec. Officer.

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

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS
BASE SECTION USASOS
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL

APC 923

2 JAN 1945

BSQMM

704.5/121

SUBJECT : Casualty Information

TO : Commanding Officer, 64 Bomb Sq., 43d Bomb Gp., APC 72.

1. Graves Registration Central Records, Headquarters, Base Section USASOS, APC 923, contain the following casualty information:

Name, Rank and ASN:	Aguirre, Richard U., O-733398, 2d Lt.
Organization	64 Bm.Sq., 43d Bm. Gp.
Place of Death	Near Rabaul
Date of Death	21 May, 1943. KIA.

2. Request this headquarters be furnished all available information relative to the circumstances surrounding the death of the abovementioned deceased and whether or not recovery and burial of body was accomplished.

For the Commanding General:

M. T. Vucurevich

M. T. VUCUREVICH
Capt. A.G.D.
Asst. Adjutant General

1st Ind.

LP/ssn

SIXTY FOURTH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H), APC 72, 14 January, 1945.

TO: Commanding General, Headquarters, Base Section USASOS, APC 923.

1. Attention invited to attached enclosures which indicate all available information concerning above named Officer.

2. This organization has no knowledge of recovery of body.

CONFIDENTIAL

Lin Parker Jr. Atm
LIN PARKER, JR.,
Captain, Air Corps
Commanding.

HQ BASE SECTION
USASOS
19 JAN 1945
704.5/121

2 Incls:

Incl 1 - Casualty Report, 22 May, 1943.

Incl 2 - Ltr. USAFFE, 20 February, 1944, FEXC 704.5

CONFIDENTIAL
Removed

BASIC: Ltr. Hq.B.S. SOS, APO 923, 2 Jan.45, BSQMM 704.5, subj:
Casualty Information - Aguirre, Richard U. 2d Lt.

BSQMM 704.5/121 2d Ind.
HEADQUARTERS, BASE SECTION USASOS, APO 923.

23 JAN 1945

THRU: Commanding General, USAFTE, APO 501.

TO : The Quartermaster General, Washington, 25 D.C.

Attention is invited to basic communication, 1st Indorsement
and inclosures thereto, which are forwarded for information and file.

For the Commanding General:

M. T. Vucurevich

M. T. VUCUREVICH
Capt. A.G.D.
Asst. Adjutant General

2 Incls.
n/c

293
FESC -AGUIRRE, Richard U. (0)
(2 Jan 45)

0-733398
3rd Ind.

HQ UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES IN THE FAR EAST, A.P.O. 501, 3 February 1945.
To: The Quartermaster General, Washington 25, D. C.

For the Commanding General:

Samuel L. Buck
SAMUEL L. BUCK,
Major A. G. D.,
Asst. Adj. Gen.

2 Incls: n/c.

O. G. M. G.
Classification Changed to
Removed
by Authority of The O. M. G.
Name RAY, E. McKEY
Rank CAPT. OMC
Office
Date 15 Feb 45

CONFIDENTIAL
Removed

7-6 2/23/44

llu

293 Aguirre, Richard U. (2-47)

KNOWN INFORMATION: The plane crashed on 21 May 43 about 0348 hours in St. Georges Channel, New Britain. The right wing of the ship was hit setting numbers 1 and 2 engines on fire. The incendiary bombs were on fire. I bailed out at about 200 feet above the water. I was hit by shrapnel by the second burst of fire and I noticed that the navigator, Lt. Augirre seemed slightly dazed. None of the crew other than the co-pilot, Lt. Rippy and myself succeeded in bailing out and I believe that there is no possible chance that any other of the remaining members of the crew could have survived the explosion of the ship. As I hit the water, I could see the co-pilot's chute travelling down toward the water, and striking the water approximately 3/4 of a mile from where I had landed, but I never was able to make contact with him. The ship hit the water and exploded immediately. I could see the tail and one wing section blown into the air and settle into the water. I inflated my Mae West and swam for seven hours until I reached the shore near the reef just below Induna Island.

HEARSAY INFORMATION: I later learned from natives who assisted me that the co-pilot being unable to hide because he was exhausted from the six hour swim to shore and was subsequently captured by two Japanese soldiers who took him to Rabaul by destroyer, sent down for that purpose (which destroyer I saw myself.) The natives told me that the co-pilot was beheaded when he reached Rabaul.

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

MACR NO. 2459

WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON

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

- ORGANIZATION: LOCATION: Dobadura, New Guinea
GROUP: 43 Bm (H) ; SQUADRON: 64 Bm. (H) ; DETACHMENT: _____
COMMAND OR AIR FORCE: _____
- SPECIFY: POINT OF DEPARTURE: Dobadura, New Guinea ; COURSE: _____
INTENDED DESTINATION: Vunakanau Airdrome, Rabaul, N.B. ; TYPE OF MISSION: Bombing
- WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED: _____
- GIVE: (A) DATE: 21 May 43 ; TIME: 0948 hrs. ; AND LOCATION OF LAST KNOWN WHEREABOUTS OF MISSING AIRCRAFT: St. Georges Channel, New Britain
(B) SPECIFY WHETHER () LAST SIGHTED; () LAST CONTACTED BY RADIO;
() FORCED DOWN; () SEEN TO CRASH; OR () INFORMATION NOT AVAILABLE.
- 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: _____
- AIRCRAFT: TYPE, MODEL AND SERIES: B-17-E ; AAF SERIAL NO. 41-9244
- ENGINES: TYPE, MODEL AND SERIES: _____ ; AAF SERIAL NO. (A) _____
(B) _____ (C) _____ (D) _____
- INSTALLED WEAPONS (FURNISH BELOW MAKE, TYPE AND SERIAL NUMBER)
(A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____ (D) _____
(E) _____ (F) _____ (G) _____ (H) _____
- THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (A) BATTLE CASUALTY: XX
OR (B) NON-BATTLE CASUALTY: _____
- NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: CREW : PASSENGERS : TOTAL _____
(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	STATUS
(1) PILOT	Williams, Paul I.	Major	0418154	KIA
(2) CO-PILOT	Rippy, John S.	2nd Lt.	0730964	DED
(3) Obsr.	Heller, Robert F.	1st Lt.	0398021	KIA
(4) Nav	Aguirre, Richard U.	2nd Lt.	0733398	KIA
(5) Bomb	Manuel, Gordon R.	M/Sgt.	13023327	RTD
(6) Engr	Gills, Robert B. Jr.	S/Sgt	33122679	KIA
(7) Gnr	Rexroat, Lawrence L.	S/Sgt	18004066	KIA
(8) Gnr	Curry, Robert A.	S/Sgt.	11007351	KIA
(9) R. Opr.	Driscoll, Edward W.	Sgt.	36047422	KIA
(10) Gnr.	Murray, Joseph R.	Sgt	13047717	KIA
(11) Gnr.	Smith, William R.	Pfc	15098049	KIA

- IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWLEDGE OF AIRCRAFT, AND CHECK APPROPRIATE COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SAME:

NAME IN FULL (LAST NAME FIRST)	RANK	SERIAL NUMBER	CONTACTED BY RADIO	LAST SIGHTED	SAW CRASH	SAW FORCED LANDING
(1)						
(2)						
(3)						

- 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) _____
- ATTACH EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTION OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES PERTAINING TO MISSING AIRCRAFT.
- ATTACH AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, MAP, CHART, OR SKETCH, SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATION WHERE AIRCRAFT WAS LAST SEEN.
- ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTENT OF SEARCH, IF ANY, AND GIVE NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE.

Remarks on reverse side.

(Date of Report)

(Signature of Preparing Officer)

REMARKS: (Use additional sheet if necessary)

DATA ON REMAINS NOT YET RECOVERED OR IDENTIFIED

NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial) AGUIRRE, RICHARD U.		GRADE 2nd Lt.	PRESENT SERIAL NUMBER 0-733,398	
ORGANIZATION 64 Bomb Sq. 43 Bomb Gp. (H)		RACE White	CREED Catholic	FORMER SERIAL NUMBER (If applicable) 19-022-315
DATE OF DEATH 1944 21 May 43	CAUSE OF DEATH KIA		PLACE OF DEATH OR PLACE LAST SEEN IF MIA Southwest Pacific Area	
DATE OF FOD				
HEIGHT 72"	WEIGHT 183	COLOR EYES Brown	COLOR HAIR Black	SHOE SIZE 10B

DENTAL CHART

7 Oct 42

UPPER RIGHT

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

UPPER LEFT

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

X X

LOWER RIGHT

X 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9

LOWER LEFT

9 10 11 12 13 X 14 15 16

X = Extracted

O = Carious

1 = Carious Non-Restorable

FRACTURES AND/OR BREAKS

Not of record

TATTOOS AND/OR BIRTHMARK

Not of record

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Age-24

Born-24 Mar 19

Last seen near Rabaul, New Britian

MACR 2459

JW/E. King

A I R M A I L
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

In Reply Refer To
QMGM 293

Aguirre, Richard U.
O-733,398

28 November 1947

SUBJECT: Additional Information That May Lead to the Recovery
and Identification of Remains Not Yet Accounted For

TO: Commanding General
Philippine-Ryukyus Command
APO 707, c/o Postmaster
San Francisco, California

1. There is attached hereto, in duplicate, OQMG Form 371
(covering all available information in the Office of the Quartermaster
General and is in addition to any previous information forwarded by
this office to your headquarters) for the following deceased individual:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>SERIAL NO.</u>
Aguirre, Richard U.	2nd Lt.	O-733,398

2. It is requested that information on the above deceased be
furnished this office in accordance with provisions of Letter, The
Adjutant General's Office, file AGAO-S 293.9 (27 Mar 47) D-M, subject
Establishment of Boards of Review for Identification of Unknown Dead
Overseas, dated 9 April 1947.

FOR THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL:

Incl
Form 371 (In Dup)

James C. MacFarland
JAMES C. MAC FARLAND
Major, QMC
Memorial Division

JW

A I R M A I L

EJS
Q

AIRMAIL

pull

2

QMGMS 293 *GPS Pacific* 1st Ind
Ident
~~Aguirre, Richard U.~~
SN - 0-733398

Dept. of the Army, OCMG, Washington 25, D. C., 28 September 1948

TO: Commanding Officer, American Graves Registration Service,
Pacific Zone, APO 958, c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, California

1. In compliance with request made in basic communication, in-
closed herewith are OCMG Forms 371 covering all available information
on the following decedents:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>SERIAL NO.</u>
Aguirre, Richard U.	2/Lt	0-733398
Driscoll, Edward W.	Sgt	36047422
<u>Gills</u> , Robert B. Jr.	S/Sgt	33122679
Curry, Robert A.	Sgt	11007351

Underlined portion of decedent's name and serial number shows a cor-
rection made by this office.

2. Supplement of SR&D Report, Subject: Corrected date of death
of Sergeant Robert A. Curry submitted herewith for your information.

FOR THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL:

5 Incls:

- 1 - SR&D Rpt (in dup)
dtd 6 Dec 46 (Curry)
- 2-3 OCMG Forms 371
(in dup)
- 4-5 OCMG Forms 371
(info cys)

T. H. METZ
Lt. Col. OMC
Memorial Division

X 293 Aguirre, Richard U. (2nd Lt) 0-733398

Identification Section
Memorial Division

Identification Data

243 Last Name First Initial ^{ASN} 0-733,398 Grade
AGUIRRE RICHARD V 19022315 2ND LT.
Height Weight Color Eyes Color Hair Shoe Size Date of Death
72 IN 183 LBS BROWN BLACK 10B 21 MAY 1943

Last Organization to which attached or assigned (Give complete designation)

64TH Bomb Sq 43RD Bomb GR (H)

Place of Death or place last seen if MIA

LAST SEEN NEAR RABAU L NEW BRITAIN

List all camps in which stationed in U.S. prior to service overseas, including inclusive dates at each.

STATION

DATES

MATHER FLD, CALIF
HAMILTON FLD, CALIF

OCT 42 - NOV 42
NOV 42 - DEC 42

FILE

OCT 6 1948

E. J. Sullivan, Jr. Lt. Col. (USC)
IDENTIFICATION DIVISION

Fractures and/or Breaks

Tattoos and/or Birth marks

NOT OF RECORD

NOT OF RECORD

DENTAL CHART

7 OCT 42

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

1 2 3 X X 6 7 8

Upper Right

Upper Left

X 15 14 13 X 11 10 9

9 10 11 12 13 X 15 16

Lower Right

Lower Left

X - Extracted

O - Carious

/ - Carious non-restorable

Indicate dentures, bridgework, etc., if shown

File
K. H. Hooper
9/30/48

293.9 Subj: Summary of Pertinent Facts on Case No. 7802

Master Sergeant Manuel landed in the water in St. Georges Channel, approximately seven (7) miles due East of Talilis Plantation and the Co-Pilot (Lt. Rippy) landed three-fourth (3/4) of a mile Northeast of Master Sergeant Manuel.

According to a statement by Master Sergeant Manuel, Lieutenant Rippy swam to the beach between Matala Plantation and Induna Island. He was then captured by the Japanese, taken to Rabaul by Destroyer and be-headed.

Master Sergeant Manuel, who survived the crash does not believe that any of the other crew members could have possibly survived the crash and subsequent explosion.

No further information is available at this time.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

12 Incls

- 1-10 Form 8's on
abv decedents
- 11. Cy, MACR (unnumbered)
- 12. Cy, Statement of M/Sgt. Manuel

W. E. DOWNING
1st Lt., QMC
P & O Division

HEADQUARTERS
AMERICAN GRAVES REGISTRATION SERVICE
(PACIFIC ZONE)
APO 958

RPOSR/FA 13228

298.9

7 February 1948

SUBJECT: Summary of Pertinent Facts on Case No. 7802

TO: Commanding Officer, Search and Recovery Team, AGRS-PAZ

1. Case No. 7802
2. Organization: 64th Bombardment Squadron
43rd Bombardment Group, 5th Air Force
3. Personnel Involved:

Major	Paul I. William	0-418154
1st Lt.	Robert F. Heller	0-398021
2nd Lt.	John S. Rippy	0-730964
2nd Lt.	Richard U. Aguirre	0-733398
S/Sgt.	Lawrence L. Rexroat	18004066
S/Sgt.	Robert B. Gills, Jr.	33122679
Sgt.	Edward W. Driscoll	36047422
Sgt.	Robert A. (F) Curry	11007351
Sgt.	Joseph R. Murray	13047717
Pfc.	William R. Smith	15098049

4. Plane: B-17-E
AAF Serial No. 41-9244

5. The personnel mentioned above in Aircraft No. 41-9244 departed on 21 May 1943 from Dobodura, New Guinea on a bombing mission to Vunakanau Airdrome, Rabaul, New Britain, Solomon Islands.

At 8,000 feet while crossing the Warangoi River (New Britain) the aircraft mentioned above was attacked without warning by a twin-engined night fighter. The first knowledge of the attack came when the right wing was hit, and number 3 and 4 engines were immediately set on fire. The plane leveled off at 6,000 feet and was then hit by a second burst in the left wing, setting engines number 1 and 2 on fire. The plane began losing altitude and the Co-Pilot (Lt. Rippy) bailed out. The plane then went into a 45° dive toward the water when M/SGT - GORDON R. MANUEL, 13023327 (the only survivor of the above aircrash) bailed out. The plane then hit the water and exploded.

Ltr, Hq AGRS (PAZ), APO 958 dtd 7 Feb 48; Subj: Summary of Pertinent Facts on Case #7802

1st Ind

Hqs, Search and Recovery Expedition #2, APO 958, 28 April 1949

TO: Chief, AGRS (PAZ), APO 958

1. The facts concerning Case #7802, involving the following personnel listed in paragraph 3 of basic letter, are as follows:

a. As indicated in the basic communication this aircraft was shot down by a night flighter and crashed in the water and exploded. Two men bailed out of the ship, M/Sgt Manuel and Lt Rippy and landed in the water. Master Manuel, the only survivor, stated that Lt. Rippy swam ashore, was captured by the Japanese and beheaded M/Sgt Manuel states that he does not believe that any of the other crew members could have survived the crash and subsequent explosion.

b. In view of the fact that a more exact geographical crash location is not available it was not feasible to attempt an underwater search, however general searches and investigations were made in the vicinity of Worangai, Talilis Plantation and the surrounding area.

2. Between 1 Dec 48 and 31 Jan 49 a detachment of search and recovery personnel of the 604th QM S&R Co. and a number of additional search teams conducted extensive searches and investigations for the several hundred aircraft missing over New Britain and in the waters surrounding New Britain and in the waters surrounding New Britain. During this period hundreds of persons, consisting of missionaries, government officials, plantation owners and managers, planters and natives were contacted, interviewed and questioned. A number of remains were recovered and a quantity of information was received, however no information could be secured concerning this case.

3. In view of the above information it is recommended that the Japanese War Crimes Commission, War Criminals Compound at Manus Is. be contacted for any information they may have received or may receive from persons interned there who were previously in the N.B. area and who might know the disposition of Lt Rippy and possibly other members of the crew.

4. In the event that no additional information can be secured from the source indicated in Paragraph 3 it is then recommended that this case be closed.

12 Incls
w/d

F. R. BRYAN
Lt Col, TC
Commanding

AIRMAIL

HEADQUARTERS
AMERICAN GRAVES REGISTRATION SERVICE
(PACIFIC ZONE)
APO 958

In reply refer to:
RRREC 293.9 (Rippy, John S.
SN O-730964)

22 Nov 1948

SUBJECT: Letter of Transmittal

TO: Commanding Officer
Hq American Graves Registration Service
PHILCOM Zone
APO 707

1. Forwarded herewith are OQMG Forms 371 for Second Lieutenant John S. Rippy, serial number O-730964 and Sergeant Robert A. Curry, serial number 11007351, as requested in your radio GX 21612 GSGR, dated 20 November 1948.

- 2. It is requested that this headquarters be notified of findings.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

2 Incls
1. Cy, Form 371 - Rippy
2. Cy, Form 371 - Curry
w/memo atchd

HORACE MANN
Captain, QMC
Chief, RR Division

BASIC: Ltr fr Headquarters, American Graves Registration Service (Pacific Zone), APO 958, file RRREC 293.9 (Rippy, John S., SN O-730964), dtd Nov. 22, 1948, subj: "Letter of Transmittal."

4. There is one other possibility according to information on file at PHILCOM Zone, AGRS headquarters, regarding the fate of some of the Rabaul prisoners. This information is from a 1947 Report of Investigation Division, Legal Section, GHQ, SCAP, which indicates that some of the Rabaul prisoners may have been put aboard one of two or three Japanese POW ships which left Rabaul for Japan in Dec. 1943 and Feb. 1944, but all of which are reported to have been sunk enroute. This information may however have been a Jap cover-up for the execution of Allied prisoners of war. In the case of Lt. Rippy and Sgt. Curry, it seems probable that both of these prisoners were beheaded and buried at some unknown place, or that they may have been cremated by the Japs.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

2 Incls: n/c

NORMAN L. QUIGG
CWO, USA
Asst Adj Gen

8581

BASIC: Ltr fr Headquarters, American Graves Registration Service (Pacific Zone), APO 958, file RRREC 293.9 (Rippy, John S., SN O-730964), dtd Nov. 22, 1948, subj: "Letter of Transmittal."

GSGR 293.9
(Rippy, John S.
SN O-730964)

1st Ind.

HEADQUARTERS, PHILIPPINES COMMAND, APO 707, 16 Dec 1948

TO: Commanding Officer, Pacific Zone, AGRS, APO 958

1. A check of all unknowns from Rabaul, New Britain, and the Bismarck Archipelago, with place and cause of death unknown, has been made against the OQMG Forms 371 for 2nd Lt. John S. Rippy and Sgt. Robert A. Curry with negative results. The OQMG Forms 371 for Lt. Rippy and Sgt. Curry cannot be associated definitely with any of the unknowns from Rabaul, New Britain, or from the Bismarck Archipelago. Accordingly, the Board of Review, PHILCOM Zone, AGRS, concur in the recommendation of non-recoverability for the two survivors of the B-17 aircraft, No. 41-9244, Lt. Rippy and Sgt. Curry, who were two of the crew of eleven, which crashed in St. George Channel, New Britain, 21 May 1943, were captured by the Japanese, and are unaccounted for since the time they were last seen at the Rabaul Navy Prison Camp, 25 November 1943.

2. In accordance with the inclosed 6 December 1946 Report of Investigation to the Chief, Casualty Branch, A.G.O., subj: "Corrected Date of Death," and approval by order of the Secretary of War, 9 December 1943 has been established as the date on which Sgt. Robert A. Curry was killed in action while a prisoner of the Japanese.

3. Attention is invited to the 27 November 1948 letter, this headquarters, subj: "B-17, AAF SN 41-9244, Crash, 21 May 1943, St. George Channel, New Britain," which contained information regarding both Lt. Rippy and Sgt. Curry. From a study of all available information regarding these two cases, it seems certain that both Lt. Rippy and Sgt. Curry survived the plane crash, were taken prisoners by the Japanese and were taken to the Navy Prison Camp at Rabaul, New Britain. The available information regarding the fate of each of these two prisoners of war indicates that they most probably were beheaded by the Japanese on/or about 25 November 1943 or shortly thereafter, after they were removed from the camp at Rabaul on 25 November 1943. There seems to be no record as to where they were beheaded or where their remains may have been buried or cremated.

AG 201 Curry, Robert A.
(6 Dec 46) 11007351

that Sgt Robert A. Curry, 11007351, Air Corps was killed in action while a prisoner of the Japanese on 9 December 1943 near Rabaul, New Britain, while in flying pay status.

Do not send telegram. Route to S. R. & D. for notification.

JOHN J. McGUIRE
Investigator

APPROVED. Recommended action will be taken.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

WM. D. CARTWRIGHT
Lt. Colonel AGD
Chief, Casualty Branch

AG 201 Curry, Robert A.
(6 Dec 46) 11007351

"As for the Destroyer that came and picked up the survivor, I was too far away to observe who the prisoner of the Japanese was. The natives told me that the Japanese only captured one American, this American I presumed to be Lt. Rippey. If there had been any other Americans to arrive on the shore and were not captured immediately I would have contacted them as my natives were honest and loyal."

8. In reply to a request for the date on which the crew member was captured, taken to Rabaul, New Britain, allegedly executed and when the information was furnished to him, Lieutenant Manuel wrote that the crew member was captured and taken to Rabaul on 21 May 1943. He stated that he was allegedly beheaded about four or five days after he was taken to Rabaul, and that the news reached him about three or four weeks from that time.

9. Upon reviewing the foregoing facts, it becomes evident that the original report of death of Sgt Curry which was based on the initial report submitted by Lt Manuel on his return was erroneous. Lt Manuel knowing that Lt Rippey bailed out of the aircraft previously and seeing but one parachute in the air at the time he hit the water, presumed that Lt Rippey was the only other survivor. The letter from the Rev. Lamarre, and his statement, stating that he met Sgt Curry in the Rabaul prison camp in August 1943 and was with him until the 25 November 1943 presents conclusive evidence that Sgt Curry, in some unknown manner, also survived the destruction of the aircraft. It is also apparent from the two sources of information, Lt Manuel and the Rev. Lamarre, that their statements refer to different persons. The person reported captured by Lt Manuel was reported beheaded shortly after his arrival at Rabaul and the information relayed to him about three or four weeks later, which time was prior to the date on which the Rev. Lamarre met Sgt Curry. Although the manner of Sgt Curry's survival of the crash, his capture and imprisonment is not known, it must be an accepted fact that his death did not occur on 21 May 1943 as originally reported, but sometime after he was removed from the prison camp. Since all reports indicate that he was beheaded after being removed from the camp on 25 November 1943 and that the information was received approximately two weeks later by the Rev. Lamarre, it is recommended that 9 December 1943, two weeks subsequent to his removal from camp, be accepted as the date of death, this being the approximate date on which the information was received by the Rev. Lamarre and the last possible date subject person could have been alive.

10. It is, therefore, recommended that pursuant to the authority contained in Section 9, Missing Persons Act, the foregoing information be accepted as an official report of death and that a corrected casualty report be initiated stating

AG 201 Curry, Robert A.
(6 Dec 46) 11007351

Airmen. Their names and addresses I obtained from them and practically all my statements from them. I am the only civilian survivor from that camp. Other written information buried in the trenches was not found after the liberation in September 1945:

"ROBERT CURRY - Father: Simon P. Curry, 536 Willard Street, Quincy, Mass.

Shot down around May 1943. Only survivor of the plane. Brought to Kokopo near Rabaul. Tortured by M.P: no food for four days; refused to give any information; transferred to Rabaul Navy Prison Camp; often tortured. Taken away from Navy Prison Camp 25 November 1943.

"Taken away from Navy Prison Camp at Rabaul 25 November 1943. We Civilians were out in the bush at the time. Japanese guards told us that twelve prisoners were being taken to Japan. About two weeks later Indian prisoners of war told me that twelve American Airman had been beheaded on the outskirts of Rabaul."

7. A letter, dated 16 September 1946, from Gordon R. Manuel, now a Lieutenant in the Air Corps, in response to a request from this office for verification of information contained in the E. and E. report and the manner in which he identified the parachutist's and captured prisoner as Lt. Rippey, reads as follows:

"I did not know that Sgt Curry bailed out on the night of May 21, 1943. To my knowledge, the only other person to bail out of the airplane other than myself was Lt. Rippey. Lt. Rippey bailed out of the airplane before I did and because of it being night, it was impossible for me to know whether or not his parachute opened. However, after I hit the water I observed one parachute in the air about one half mile away from me. After that parachute hit the water I never made contact with it again.

"I do not know the number of men on the airplane wearing parachutes, however on night missions the gunners and radio operator were not accustomed to wearing them. It would have been possible that Sgt Curry could have been wearing a parachute. If Sgt Curry reached shore, then Lt. Rippey's parachute did not open or else he was not able to reach shore.

AG 201 Curry, Robert A.
(6 Dec 46) 11007351

4. A letter dated 3 January 1946, from Representative Richard B. Wigglesworth, House of Representatives, AG 201 Curry, Robert A. (3 Jan 46), inclosed a copy of a letter written by the Rev. Joseph Lamarre, a Catholic missionary, dated 27 October 1945, to Mr. Simon P. Curry, 536 Willard Street, West Quincy, Massachusetts, the pertinent parts of which are as follows:

"This letter will be a surprise to you. I am a Catholic Priest from Brunswick, Maine, since 1936 missionary in the Solomons. For over three years I have lingered in various Japanese Prison Camps. While in the Rabaul Camp I met your son Bob. That is the reason of this letter: a word of comfort if you have not yet heard from him.

"Bob was shot down around May 1943 over New Britain. He was the only man saved out of his plane. He was kept in the Rabaul Prison when I arrived there at the end of August 1943. He was in good health and in good spirits. On November 25th, 1943, he and eleven others were taken away from our Camp. We heard rumors from the natives that they were beheaded. But nothing of that is certain. After the surrender of Rabaul six weeks ago we were unable to trace him.--".

5. A reply by 5th Ind., GSXRP 201 Curry, Robert A. (29 Jan 46), from the Commanding General, USAF, Western Pacific, to a request from this office, requesting a statement be secured from the Rev. Lamarre for further information and the names of other personnel who might be able to supply additional facts, elicited the following information in the form a statement from the Rev. Lamarre:

"Robert Curry - Father: Simon P. Curry, 536 Willard Street,
Quincy, Mass.

Shot down around May 1943. Only survivor of the plane.
Brought to Kokopo near Rabaul. Tortured by M. P.; no food
for days, refused to give any information; transferred to
Rabaul Navy Prison Camp; often tortured. Taken away from
Navy Prison Camp 25 November 1943."

6. A copy of a signed statement by the Rev. Joseph Lamarre, S.M., concerning the alleged execution of 12 airmen, reads in pertinent part as follows:

"I, JOSEPH LAMARRE, S.M., Villa Maria, Hunters Hill, Sydney, American Citizen, Catholic Priest, was a Missionary in Buka Island when Japanese invaded Buka and Bougainville in March 1942. I was taken prisoner after the Guadalcanal episode, namely 26 August 1942 and was kept prisoner on the island of Sohana near Buka Passage. On the 28th of August 1943 I was brought to the Navy Prison Camp at Rabaul and interred with twelve civilians, mostly Australians, and there met the following

8581

AG 201 Curry, Robert A.
(6 Dec 46) 11007351

McG/mmh/1E471/5512

6 December 1946

MEMORANDUM TO: Chief, Casualty Branch, A.G.O.

SUBJECT: Corrected date of death.

1. Sergeant Robert A. Curry, 11007351, 64th Bomb Squadron, 43rd Bomb Group, was reported missing in action since 21 May 1943 near Rabaul, New Britain, by radio No. C 2680, dated 25 May 1943, from Brisbane, Casualty Branch message No. 1450052.

2. Radio message No. C 1912 from Brisbane, dated 20 February 1944, reported Sgt Robert A. Curry, 11007351, killed in action while on flying pay status 21 May 1943 on the basis of information obtained from Gordon R. Manuel, 13023327, Master Sergeant, Air Corps, reported returned to military control.

3. A copy of an E and E Report No. 37, prepared by MIS-X Section, POW Branch, dated 23 May 1944, on information furnished by Master Sergeant Gordon R. Manuel, 13023327, the bombardier on a B-17 E Type aircraft which was lost on 21 May 1943, list the crew members of subject aircraft and contains the following pertinent information:

"KNOWN INFORMATION: The plane crashed on 21 May 43 about 0348 hours in St. Georges Channel, New Britain. The right wing of the ship was hit setting fire to numbers 3 and 4 engines. Later a second burst was received in the left wing setting numbers 1 and 2 engines on fire. The incendiary bombs were on fire. I bailed out at about 200 feet above the water. I was hit by shrapnel by the second burst of fire and I noticed that the navigator, Lt. Aguirre seemed slightly dazed. None of the crew other than the co-pilot, Lt. Rippy and myself succeeded in bailing out and I believe that there is no possible chance that any other of the remaining members of the crew could have survived the explosion of the ship. As I hit the water, I could see the co-pilot's chute travelling down toward the water, and striking the water approximately 3/4 of a mile from where I had landed, but I never was able to make contact with him. The ship hit the water and exploded immediately. I could see the tail and one wing section blown into the air and settle into the water. I inflated my Mae West and swam for seven hours until I reached the shore near the reef just below Induna Island.

"HEARSAY INFORMATION: I later learned from natives who assisted me that the co-pilot being unable to hide because he was exhausted from the six hour swim to shore and was subsequently captured by two Japanese soldiers who took him to Rabaul by destroyer, sent down for that purpose (which destroyer I saw myself). The natives told me that the co-pilot was beheaded when he reached Rabaul.

R E S T R I C T E D

MACR No. 2459
COPYWAR 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 aircraft is officially reported missing.

1. ORGANIZATION: Location: Dobadura, New Guinea Command or Air Force GROUP 43 Bn (H); SQUADRON 64 Bn (H); DETACHMENT
2. SPECIFY: Point of Departure Dobadura, New Guinea Course Intended Destination Vunakanau Airdrome, Rabaul; Type of Mission Bombing
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED
4. GIVE: (a) Date 21 May 43 Time 038 Hrs; Location of Last known whereabouts of missing aircraft St. Georges Channel, New Britain
(b) Specify whether () Last sighted; () Last contacted by radio; () Forced down; () 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; () Enemy Anti-Aircraft; () Other Circumstances as follows
6. AIRCRAFT: Type, Model and Series B-17-E; AAF Serial No. 41-9244
7. ENGINES: Type, Model and Series _____; AAF Serial No. (a) _____
(b) _____ (c) _____ (d) _____
8. INSTALL WEAPONS (Furnish below Make, Type and Serial Number)
(a) _____ (b) _____ (c) _____ (d) _____
(e) _____ (f) _____ (g) _____ (h) _____
9. THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty XX
or (b) Non-Battle Casualty _____
10. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew _____ Passengers _____ Total _____
(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	Status
1. Pilot	Williams, Paul I.	Major	0418154	KIA 21 May 43
2. Co-Pilot Obsr.	Heller, Robert F.	1st Lt	0398021	KIA 21 May 43
3. Nav	Aguirre, Richard U.	2nd Lt	0733398	KIA 21 May 43
4. Co-Pilot	Rippy, John S.	2nd Lt	0730964	KIA 21 May 43
5. Bomb	Manuel, Gordon R.	M/Sgt	13023327	RTD 22 Feb 44
6. Engr	Gills, Robert B., Jr.	S/Sgt	33122679	KIA 21 May 43
7. Gnr	Rexroat, Lawrence L.	S/Sgt	18004066	KIA 21 May 43
8. Gnr	Curry, Robert A.	Sgt	11007351	KIA 9 Dec 43
9. R. Opr	Driscoll, Edward W.	Sgt	36047422	KIA 21 May 43
10. Gnr	Murray, Joseph R.	Sgt	13047717	KIA 21 May 43
11. Gnr	Smith, William R.	Pfc	15098049	KIA 21 May 43

R E S T R I C T E D

C6-80493, AF

WD, Hq AAF, Washington, Missing Air Crew Report

12. IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWLEDGE OF AIRCRAFT, AND CHECK APPROPRIATE COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SAME:

Name in Full (Last name first)	Rank	Serial Number	Contacted by Radio	Last Sighted	Saw Crash	Saw Forced Landing
1.						
2.						
3.						

13. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, ANSWER TO 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.

15. ATTACH EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTION OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES PERTAINING TO MISSING AIRCRAFT.

16. ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTENT OF SEARCH, IF ANY, AND GIVEN NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE HERE _____

Date of Report _____

(Signature of Preparing Officer) _____

REMARKS:

1. Airplane B-17-E 41-9244 departed from Dobadura, New Guinea at 0100 hours 21 May 1943, for the purpose of bombing Vanakanau Airdrome, Rabaul, New Britain. After crossing the Warangoi River in the Cape Gazelle vicinity, enroute to the target the plane was suddenly hit in the number 3 and 4 engines by fire from a night fighter. A few seconds later engines 1 and 2 were set on fire by a second burst which necessitated a crash landing being made in St. George's Channel, approximately 7 miles due east of Talilis Plantation. The entire crew list is listed on reverse side.

2. Sergeant MANUEL and Lieutenant RIPPY were the only ones to bail out of the crippled ship before it hit the water. MANUEL returned to military control 5 February 1944. He stated that the airplane exploded upon impact with the water and sank immediately. On the basis of his signed statement that he believed that no one in the plane could possibly have survived the crash the status of the remaining crew members, Lieutenant RIPPY excepted, has been changed from missing in action to killed in action.

HEADQUARTERS
AMERICAN GRAVES REGISTRATION SERVICE
(PACIFIC ZONE)
APO 958

Special Orders)

Number 47)

27 May 1949

1. The Board of Review aptd per par 2 SO 34 this Hq dtd 26 Apr 49 is dissolved.

2. Pursuant to auth contained in ltr TAGO file AGAO 293.9 (27 Mar 47) D-M subj "Establishment of Boards of Review for Identification of Unknown Dead Overseas" dtd 9 Apr 47 a Board of Review is aptd to meet at this sta at the call of the senior member thereof for the purpose of:

a. Reviewing and acting upon all cases pertaining to the identity of unknown remains referred to the Board by Zone Hq AGRS.

b. Reviewing and determining, in all cases, from evidence presented, the non-recoverability of remains referred to the Board by Zone HQ AGRS.

Detail for the Board

MAJOR RALPH E HOLLISTER AO222238 USAF
MAJOR FRANK M GREEN JR 0386164 QMC
CAPT HAROLD E FIKE 0336714 INF
CAPT STANLEY E MAY 01577536 QMC
CAPT JAMES E WINTERBOTTOM 01585095 QMC
CAPT GILBERT L H WONG 0277929 INF

BY ORDER OF COLONEL WALDRON:

OFFICIAL:

EVERETT M. O'BRIEN
1st Lt., QMC
Adjutant

/s/ EVERETT M. O'BRIEN
1st Lt., QMC
Adjutant

DISTRIBUTION:

"A"

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

William R. DeWeese

WILLIAM R. DeWEESE
1st Lt. QMC

R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
AMERICAN GRAVES REGISTRATION SERVICE
(PACIFIC ZONE)
APO 958

BOARD PROCEEDINGS)

NUMBER 2245)

PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD OF REVIEW

1. The Board of Review convened on 31 May 1949 pursuant to Par 2b, Special Orders 47, Headquarters, American Graves Registration Service, Pacific Zone, APO 958, dated 27 May 1949. (Exhibit A)

2. Summary

a. Personnel Involved (AGRS-PAZ Case No. 7802)

WILLIAMS, Paul I.	Capt	0-418154	AAF
HELLER, Robert F.	1st Lt	0-398021	AAF
AGUIRRE, Richard U.	2d Lt	0-733398	AAF
RIPPY, John S.	2d Lt	0-730964	AAF
GILLS, Robert B. Jr	S/Sgt	33122679	AAF
REXROAT, Lawrence L.	S/Sgt	18004066	AAF
CURRY, Robert A.	Sgt	11007351	AAF
DRISCOLL, Edward W.	Sgt	36047422	AAF
MURRAY, Joseph F.	Sgt	13047717	AAF
SMITH, William R.	PFC	15098049	AAF

b. The above-named personnel were 10 of 11 crew members aboard a B-17-E airplane, Serial No. 41-9244, which took off on 21 May 1943 from Dobodura, New Guinea on a bombing mission to Vanakanau Airdrome, Rabaul, New Britain, Bismarck Archipelago. While in the vicinity of Cape Gazelle, New Britain, enroute to the target, this plane was hit by fire from a night fighter which resulted in a crash landing being made in St. Georges Channel, approximately seven (7) miles due east of Talilis Plantation. The airplane exploded upon hitting the water and sank immediately. (Exhibits B-C)

c. Prior to the crash of this plane, either two (2) or three (3) men bailed out, one of whom, Master Sergeant Manuel, the eleventh crew member, assisted by natives, managed to escape the Japanese and later reached New Guinea, being returned to duty as of 5 February 1944. According to a statement made by this survivor, only he and the co-pilot, Second Lieutenant Rippy, succeeded in bailing out of the crippled ship, but no contact was made after they had bailed out. According to information received by Sergeant Manuel from the natives, the other person, believed by Sergeant Manuel to have been Lieutenant Rippy, was captured by the Japanese soon after reaching shore, and was taken by destroyer to Rabaul where he was beheaded. It was believed at that time that these were the only two (2) persons who escaped from the plane and the remainder of the crew was listed as killed in action, 21 May 1943. (Exhibits C - D)

R E S T R I C T E D

Incl 12

R E S T R I C T E D

Bd Proceedings 2245, Hq AGRS-PAZ, Contd

d. A statement obtained from Reverend Joseph Lamarre, a Catholic Missionary who was a Prisoner of War in the Navy prison Camp at Rabaul, indicates that a Robert Curry was also an internee at this prison camp, having been shot down around May 1943. Robert Curry was taken away from the camp on 25 November 1943, presumably to be taken to Japan. Indian Prisoners of War told Father Lamarre that Robert Curry along with 11 others, had been beheaded on the outskirts of Rabaul. After the surrender of Rabaul, Father Lamarre had been unable to find any trace of him. In view of this information, the date of death for Sergeant Curry was changed from 21 May 1943 to 9 December 1943. Lieutenant Rippy was carried as missing in action as of 21 May 1943 and was presumed dead as of 22 May 1944. The remainder of the crew was listed as killed in action, 21 May 1943. (Exhibit D)

e. In view of the above facts, it is believed that both Lieutenant Rippy and Sergeant Curry survived the plane crash, were taken prisoners and were probably beheaded. No record is available to show place of death or disposition of remains. It is possible that these men were placed on one (1) of three (3) Japanese Prisoner of War Ships in December 1943 enroute to Japan, but all of these ships were reported sunk. (Exhibit E)

f. Forms 371 for the above-listed decedents have been compared by the Identification Branch with unknowns recovered by the AGRS-PAZ Search and Recovery Expedition No. 2 with negative results. A comparison has also been made by the Philippines Command of all unknowns from the Rabaul and Bismarck Archipelago areas with Forms 371 for Lieutenant Rippy and Sergeant Curry with negative results and that Command concurs in declaring these remains non-recoverable. (Exhibit E)

g. Between 1 December 1948 and 31 January 1949 members of the 604th Quartermaster Graves Registration Service conducted extensive searches for the many aircraft missing over New Britain and in the waters surrounding New Britain. Hundreds of persons were contacted and questioned; a number of remains were recovered and a quantity of information was received, but nothing further was learned regarding this case. (Exhibit F)

3. Findings

After careful consideration of all the facts involved, the Board unanimously resolved that subject decedents be declared non-recoverable.

6 Exhibits

- A - SO 47, AGRS-PAZ, 27 May 49
- B - Forms 371 (10)
- C - MACR 2459
- D - Corrected Date of Death, 6 Dec 46
- E - Ltr, AGRS-PAZ, 22 Nov 48, w/1 Ind
- F - Rpt of Inv

Frank M. Green Jr
FRANK M. GREEN JR
Major, QMC
President

Stanley E. May
STANLEY E. MAY
Captain, QMC
Member

Harold E. Fike
HAROLD E. FIKE
Captain, INF
Recorder

**NON-RECOVERABLE CASE
RECORD OF REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

CASE NUMBER

8581 (10)

AREA OR ZONE(S)

PACIFIC

NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial)

AGUIRRE, Richard U.

RANK

2nd Lt

SERIAL NUMBER

O 733 398

THE ATTACHED PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIELD BOARD OF REVIEW HAVE BEEN REVIEWED AND THE FINDINGS OF NON-RECOVERABILITY OF THE REMAINS OF THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUAL(S) ARE APPROVED. (Corrections in name, rank, and/or serial number have been effected when appropriate.)

Above decedent and nine (9) others.

IN THE COURSE OF THIS REVIEW THE FOLLOWING SOURCES OF INFORMATION HAVE BEEN EXAMINED FOR ADDITIONAL CLUES. COPIES OF ANY DOCUMENTS BELIEVED MATERIAL TO THE CASE ARE ATTACHED FOLLOWING THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIELD BOARD OF REVIEW.

	INITIALS OF ANALYST	(CROSS OUT THOSE NOT APPLICABLE)	INITIALS OF ANALYST
1. 293 FILE OF SUBJECT(S)	EW	2. a. REPORT OF DEATH b. FINDING OF DEATH c. STATUS REVIEW & DETERMINATION	EW
3. A - Z FILE OF KNOWN INTERMENTS IN U.S. MILITARY CEMETERIES, ISOLATED LOCATIONS, AND SEA BURIALS	EW	4. GEOGRAPHICAL CLUE INDEX FILE OF UNKNOWNNS RECOVERED FROM APPROPRIATE AREA	EW
5. ALPHABETICAL INDEX OF "BELIEVED TO BE" AND TENTATIVELY IDENTIFIED UNKNOWNNS	EW	6. ALPHABETICAL FILE OF FORMER UNKNOWNNS NOW IDENTIFIED	EW
7. OTHER DOCUMENTS OR SOURCES Missing Air Crew Report			EW

THE FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE BEEN FOUND TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY AS PRESENTED IN THE ATTACHED PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIELD BOARD OF REVIEW, WITH THE FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS:

None

5 JUL 1949

Identification Branch

NAME OF CASE ANALYST

E. WELLINGTON/meh

CASE TO BE FORWARDED TO

FOR CONSIDERATION OF NOTIFICATION TO INTERESTED PARTIES.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

APPROVED

DATE

CASE REVIEWER, FINAL DETERMINATION SECTION

CHIEF, FINAL DETERMINATION SECTION

CHIEF, IDENTIFICATION BRANCH

T.W. GUINER

W.R. DEWEESE, 1st Lt QMC

by G.W. ROGERS, Capt QMC

8 July 1949

FINAL SEARCH AND COMPARISON OF 293 FILE

NAME AGUIRRE, RICHARD U. 2ND LT		RANK		ASN 0-733398		ORG 64TH BOMB SQ 43RD BOMB GP	
ITEM	DOCUMENTS FOR PROCESSING				FOR ACTION	ACTION TAKEN	DATE AND INITIALS
1	AG/R PRESENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				1	1	
2	B/R PRESENT (Latest if reburial) <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO				X 2		
	CEMETERY	PLOT	ROW	GRAVE			
3	PREVIOUS B/R'S (If reburial) <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				3	not of record in Identification Section	7 Oct 46 for Burial
	CEMETERY	PLOT	ROW	GRAVE			
4	BURIED WITH MILITARY HONORS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				4	4	
5	ORGANIZATION INFORMATION COMPLETE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				5	5	
6	RACE WHITE		CREED CATHOLIC		6	6	
7	NEXT OF KIN* (Relationship) WIFE				7	*	
	NAME AGUIRRE, MARGARET A.						
	STREET 1321 EAST UNION ST.						
	CITY AND STATE SEATTLE, WASHINGTON						
8	GR/L TO NOK BY CORRESPONDENCE SECTION <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Dated) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO				8	X	21 Oct 46 nam - no B/R Liscordi
9	ALL ACTIONS TAKEN AS REQUIRED IN 293 FILE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				9	9	
10	"A-Z" PRESENT, COMPLETE AND CURRENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				10	10	A-Z Made 10-12-46 mcb
	CEMETERY	PLOT	ROW	GRAVE			
11	FORM NO. 333 PRESENT, COMPLETE AND CURRENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				11	11	333 Made 10-12-46 mcb
	CEMETERY	PLOT	ROW	GRAVE			
12	PLOTTINGS OF ITEM NO. 3 REMOVED FROM P/M AND OLD FORM NO. 333 SENT TO "DEAD FILE" <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				12	12	DNA
13	LETTER OF INQUIRY TO NOK DATED:				13	13	
14	REPLY TO LETTER OF INQUIRY RECEIVED (Date)				14	14	Katherine Krauss Captain, QMG

*Doubtful case. Refer to Legal Branch, OQMG

FILE — 293

DATE

INITIALS