

Interview with Dean C. Allen, 27 January 1978, Atlanta, GA

On August 26, 1944, on a mission to Gelsenkirchen, his plane was hit by flak at about 30,000 feet. The first burst hit the left wing tip, shredding the wing inboard to the #1 engine.

The plane flipped to the left, and while the wings were vertical, a second burst hit in the area of the bomb bay doors, driving the doors inward.

A third blast tore off the rudder.

The plane turned completely over, then upright, and went into a flat spin.

At this point, five of the crew members were alive and were able to exit the plane. The navigator, pilot and engineer went out the hatch on the left side of the plane, just behind the nose compartment bulkhead. The bombardier and co-pilot were dead.

The engineer had opened the bomb bay door before leaving the area of the top turret, and was singed by flames from the fire in the bomb bay. The radio operator later reported that the catwalk in the bomb bay was melting when he opened the rear door to the bomb bay.

It was very difficult moving about in the plane when it was in the spin, but the three finally escaped from the front.

Allen was quickly captured. He was lying on the ground after his descent, and a German soldier came over to him, put his boot on Allen's chest, and removed Allen's escape packet from his pocket, and then walked away.

On the night of the 27th, they were all (five) being transported from Cologne south along the Rhine river. At a small town the train stopped in the middle of the night. The guards were all asleep, so the navigator and engineer got off the train and walked into the darkness. Allen never saw them again, but after the war saw a news item from the town which told of the mayor, police chief and three others being tried, convicted and executed for the beating deaths of two American airmen. Later checking proved that these were Allen's navigator and ~~bombardier~~ *engineer*.

1. ALLEN, 1LT Dean C. #0759675 (1st Pilot)
Prisoner of war. Survived. resides at 1744 Morris Landers Drive, NE; Atlanta, Georgia 30345. Telephone (404) 634-7402.
2. RAPP, 1LT Charles U. Jr. #0705426 (2d Pilot)
killed in aircraft.
3. DONAHUE, 1LT Charles F. #0716634 (Navigator)
member of original crew. removed from crew prior to 26 August 1944 to be a lead navigator. Survived war, now deceased. Widow Doris L. Donahue resides at 1419 Athens Road; Green Acres; Wilmington, Delaware 19803. Has kept husband's navigation records.
4. EVANS, 2LT Charles H. Jr. #Unknown (Navigator)
replaced Donahue. Killed while escaping, possibly by SS. Mother and father reside at 63 North Euclid Avenue; Bellevue, Pennsylvania. Telephone (412) 761-5679.
5. VLAHOS, 1LT Michael L. #0703540 (Bombardier)
killed after parachuting. Exact cause unknown. May have died from heart failure as he was known to be afraid of heights.
6. PURKEY, TSGT Harvey J. Jr. #16113858 (Engineer)
killed while escaping with Evans.
7. NEWSBIGLE, TSGT Robert B. #33355040 (Radio Operator)
killed, probably by civilians, upon landing after parachuting.
8. LEVEQUE, SSGT Eugene W. #39135725 (Gunner/Armorer)
killed, probably by civilians, upon landing after parachuting.
9. HUEBOTTER, SSGT Richard C. #19129898 (Gunner)
Prisoner of war. Survived. Whereabouts unknown. Have traced through California telephone directories; Veterans Administration; and Mr. Paul Baba; National Chairman, Search and Rescue; 94th Bomb Group Memorial Association; Route 1, 5231 Geer Road; Hughson, California 95326. Last known address, in Santa Monica, California, no longer exists.
10. REINARTSEN, SGT Charles R. Jr. #32607045 (Gunner)
Removed from crew upon arrival at Thurleigh. Have traced through Veterans Administration. No information available.
11. CAREY, SSGT James R. #19076562 (Gunner)
Prisoner of war. Survived. Daughter gave the following as his address. 3700 East 4th Plain Boulevard; Vancouver, WA 98661. I wrote several times, without acknowledgement, until Christmas 1976, when I received a card signed "Jim and Jean Carey". Return address Post Office Box #65; Vale, Oregon 97918. Daughter states Carey will not talk about his wartime experiences.

9 Sept 88

Dear Russ,

#604 on MASTER LISTING

Dean Allen Courtney died in
a civilian air accident on 4 May 80.

I've been calling a Dean Allen Jr for
over a week. I got thru today & said

"RKO! Hara 8¹³ AF" He interrupted & said,

"I don't need it, thank you" & hung up"

Called right back & said, "Dean I'm trying
to locate your father who was in 8¹³ AF
in England. We then talked for 20 min
Dick.