

Sunday Sept. 15, 1945

Dearest Mrs. Banta: -

I know its been terrible of me not to have written to you sooner and there really is no excuse for it at all, the fault is entirely all mine. I received a wonderful letter from you two days ago, but having been away this is my first opportunity I've had to answer.

I'm just hoping that I can tell you a very few things that may have and still be hanging heavily on your mind. All there is to know, or I should say what I know I told to Nancy Jasser, and by your letter I see that she's told you everything.

I think it would be better if I started from the beginning and told you about the whole mission. The day and one which I don't think any of us will ever forget was Sept. 12, 1944. We were awakened about



And I'm not telling you that just to make you feel good it was really true. Bob received a gold or silver star beside his name on just about every bombing he'd ever made.

First of all before we took off we knew something was going to happen because nothing went right, and everything usually worked perfectly, this morning it was just the opposite.

We had trouble with engines, guns, turrets and in general everything, and everyone was jumpy for some reason or another.

We took off and flew the northern route over water and cut down to the left of Berlin. We were leading the high group, so we naturally had to follow the lead group but the lead group was off course to the right and that brought us almost over Berlin. The flak was very heavy and accurate and we lost two engines No's 3-4.



St. Berto + Carolino up behind him and explained to them how the landing would take place, so they'd know just about what to expect.

Everything would have gone along swell but our last engine cut out at an altitude of about 200 ft. St. Dasser pulled it up as fast and well as he possibly could but without enough height it was all useless. It might have still be alright but in our path there was a tree and it stand us right in the face. The force of the crash threw everyone out of the ship, with the exception of Schultz who was thrown into a corner against a bulkhead. He in the rear part of the ship didn't know when the crash was coming so for that reason Schultz didn't make it to the Radio Room.

Mr. Berto the crash threw Bob from the ship and he was killed instantly, I know you'll be thankful to know that he incurred no suffering. Bob was thrown



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My friend Erman did however come with

about 2 weeks later and told us about the burials of our buddies. He told us of a ceremony given them with full military honors.

I was thankful for that because a lot of times they just let the body lay where fall.

John used to ask me hundreds of times each day if I had seen Bob, I told him no I hadn't because his condition was so bad that the shock might have killed him too, so I said that noone had seen Bob and he might have gotten away, then he used to be relieved a very great deal.

Mrs. Banta I know that I haven't given you really too much information, but it's all I can tell you about Bob.

If I happen to find out anything I may have overlooked I'll write you immediately. I really am very sorry for you