



UNITED STATES  
ARMY AIR FORCES

Tuesday 21st,

Dear Mrs Peters,

Received your letter yesterday....am so sorry that you have had such a time of it...if any of the following statements will help, I'll feel much relieved...but am afraid that you have ~~about~~ as much information as myself.

To start with, I was on the raid to Ahrweiler, Germany on last Dec 23rd. Lt Donnelly was also on the same mission. It was I believe either his first or second mission ...he had just been assigned to my squadron and we all liked him very much but did not get to know him as well as we would have liked.....on the mission he was shot down somewhere after the target on the way home...however, due to fairly heavy flak and intense fighter attacks by German fighter planes, he did not get back to France. We lost heavily that day and I feel it was "luck" that brought me back.

Sometime in Jan. we learned from the Ground Forces that they had found the plane crashed with 3 bodies in it.... they were identified as the enlisted crew..the gunners in Lt Donnelly's crew..... They were buried at a U.S. Cemetery in Northern France, and we received the certificates from the Graves and Registration Company.....these were forwarded thru channels and I imagine went to the parents.

Col Brandon was also shot down and to this day is still missing...we have heard nothing from him...however all the other members of his crew "chuted" to safety and were taken Prisoners.....Lt Donnelly was not in the same ship. Evidently no personnel were seen to parachute from your brother's ship, and from the findings ( the ship crashed and 3 bodies) we gather that Lt Donnelly, his Co-pilot, and his Navigator were either taken Prisoner, killed by Germans,...or killed in the crash and the bodies buried. The latter is the most likely, because our forces had just come into that territory and the Germans were few. If he were a Prisoner, you would have heard by now, however there is always that chance that he is alive someplace and on his way home...but we can not tell.

I returned to the States 3 months ago and have not yet been able to contact any of the liberated airmen from our Sqdn., but if and when I do, and there is any information about your Brother, You may rest assured I'll immediately notify you. Am so sorry the news has not been more encouraging. Feel free to write at any time for clarification of this letter.

Sincerely,

St Col L.F. Loesch  
(over)





Censorship regulations prohibited my  
writing this while the war was still  
in progress. The exact location of the  
crashed airplane is in the files of the 9th  
Bomb Division - still in Europe.