



6 May 91

Hi Russ

Per our conversation, inclosed is my check for \$55<sup>00</sup> for Mission Reports on my 33 Missions with the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Group.

My crew position was Bombardier with Ed. Schoenbacher's crew but I flew my first mission or two with one or more crews who had been there before, as was S.O.P., starting about 16 June '44, or a little later, and ending with our being shot down on 21 Nov. '44 over the Quackenbrück area of Germany, just after receiving Division Recall from our Merzeburg target, due to unacceptable weather enroute and at target.

All souls aboard survived and were imprisoned as German P.O.W's. The Navigator, Radnosky and the Co-Pilot, Traver were seriously wounded and spent years under medical care and treatment. Each of them

has a glorious story within him which has never been told - at least, not to me.

After the War, I graduated from Pilot School having entered the First Pilot Training class at Randolph Field subsequent to World War II. Flying C-46s, C-47s, C-82s, B-47s, C-7As, T-33s, and some other types, along with administrative, logistics, and command duties filled my career years including combat in the Greek Civil War and the Vietnam War.

A Regular USAF Lt. Col. <sup>Command Pilot</sup> outraged by the conduct of the Vietnam War, I retired upon return from Southeast Asia at just over twenty six years service.

Completion of a Bachelor's Degree and a year of law School led to a Real Estate sales and as a Broker Associate, I made some money and retired.

Russ, I am especially interested in the Mission Report on any "Target of Opportunity" bombing of Nordhausen, Germany and will certainly send another check as you request or advise.

I must say again how appreciative I am of the efforts you've made on behalf of the Group and on behalf of each of us. Thanks also to your Wife and Kids for the hours, days and years of sharing you and their time with you on our behalf. We are all indebted to you and your Family in gratitude for your dedication.

Sincerest Thanks  
Doug [Signature]

Doug:

See note on back of sheet.

Who didn't want Mel and Doug to complete  
this mission? It never happened in my plane!

A red handwritten signature, possibly reading "Jim", is written in a cursive style below the typed text.

S.O.#

Col

LtCol

Maj

Capt

1Lt

2Lt



(Tactics of E/A)

(Color, markings, etc. of E/A)

C L A I M S

DESTROYED \_\_\_\_\_

PROBABLY \_\_\_\_\_

DAMAGED \_\_\_\_\_

(Fill out immediately separate CLAIM FORM for each claim.)

11. FIGHTER SUPPORT ✓

12. OBSERVATIONS: Give TIME, PLACE, HEIGHT (List any observations of military importance such as balloons, decoys, dummies, camouflage, smoke screens, and signals; activity at airbases, ports, water-ways, roads, railroad yards; concentrations of vehicles, troops, vessels; landmarks, new enemy installations.) ✓

13. INCIDENTS TO FRIENDLY A/C: (If one of our A/C lost, state whether by A.A., E/A Action, accident or Undetermined Cause)

14. INJURIES TO CREW: (Give name, position in A/C, type of injury, how received, PLACE and TIME.)  
*none*

15. DAMAGE TO A/C: (Briefly) *none*

16. TECHNICAL FAILURES: *Bombardiers escape hatch cover lost.*

17. CREW COMMENTS: (any unusual incidents? any suggestions?)

S-2 OFFICER

*Wes Glass*

TIME COMPLETED

17 July '91

Douglas K. McKnight  
2130 Camino Drive  
Escondido, CA 92026

Dear Russ

Thanks for the 12 Sept. '44 Mission Report (copy).

Until now, I've been unaware that a written report was prepared regarding the M.E. 109s I shot down. At the time, I was too busy trying to get another and another to follow the first one but I knew at the time and know yet that I got him. They got out of range pretty fast. If I'd held the triggers and sprayed, I'd probably have downed more than two. As it was, I spent a couple of hours in the Chapel on my knees after that one.

Russ, you must be putting out a lot of your own money on all sorts of expenses for the benefit of the rest of us, including postage. Please accept my meager contribution to your stamps fund with my thanks.

Doug



P.S.

Surely there must be more to the report on this 12 Sept. '44 mission than this. - It was the biggest Air Show of the War! I'm certain that our routing was deliberately planned to suck up all the Luftwaffe possible in an effort to finish them off. I know our losses must have been great in numbers. Our formation and those of other Bomb. Groups were scattered all over the sky. Unless I have it confused with another mission, we arrived at target with a composite of odd lot tail identifiers formed on us as a lead. There has got to be far more to the Report of this Mission than this. Also, the Intelligence Interrogator who did the handscribed sheets did less than a skilled and well trained job - inexperienced probably.

Thanks Russ

Sincerely

Long

6 Dec. '91

Russ

The enclosed Form is returned with comments:

What do you mean "see note on back of sheet"? If you mean Item 16, no such thing ever happened on one of my flights or one of my planes.

The S-2 Officer, whose signature I can't translate into a name, was obviously not motivated by a dedication to gather factual information nor did he give a damn about being accurate.

I think the whole report is a pure fabrication, at least it is in so far as it refers to me. (a) I never flew with Broz. I recall the name but never flew with him. (b) I don't even recall the names of any of the other crew members listed. (c) I had been a 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. for a couple of months before the date of this mission. (d) Speaking of the date, in those days the

date would have been expressed:  
7 Nov. '44 not 11/7/44. (e) Just two weeks  
after this mission's date, Ed. Schoenbachler's  
crew, with me as the Bombardier, was  
shot down on another of our Merzeburg  
raids and it had been many, many  
missions since I had flown with anyone  
but Schoenbachler. In fact, I don't  
believe I flew with anyone but him  
since my fifth mission and we were  
shot down on my thirty third on 21 Nov. '44.

No Russ, whoever prepared this report  
picked my name ~~out of thin air~~ <sup>off some roster</sup>, stuck  
it with this crew way out in coffin  
corner when in fact I was classified  
as a lead and deputy lead Bombardier.

I flew combat as a Pilot in two wars  
subsequent to WWII and have forgotten  
a lot of names and a lot of missions but  
stuff like this you don't forget.

This Mission Report Form doesn't even  
identify the target. I think it is some kind  
of after the fact fabrication. For what reason  
and by whom, I can't imagine.

Regards - Doug

Merry  
Christmas!

7 Dec '91

P.S.

After some reflection, I would say that the S-2 Officer who prepared this form was very probably trying to debrief several crews as rapidly as possible and simply mixed up some crew member names. Who knew at that time that it would ever make any difference?

Russ - I want to again tell you what a hell of an asset you are to the rest of us for all the effort you have put and are putting forth on behalf of us. I hope you're getting a flood of expressions of gratitude.

Many thanks  
Doug

Doug McKnight  
2130 Camino Drive  
Escondido, Ca. 92026

11 Nov. '92

Thank you, Russ

For all your efforts on behalf of  
the rest of us.

After a five year battle against  
progressive ovarian cancer, my  
Wife, Ruth, was gratefully released  
from her medication managed suffering  
on 22 August 1992, just forty three  
days short of our fiftieth wedding  
anniversary.

Best regards

Doug