

Casualty Enquiry D.122

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To: Air Ministry, S.7. Cas. 73-77 Oxford Street, London, W.1.

Date: 2nd December, 1946.

Ref: 3MRBU/C200/382/P.4.

Casualty Enquiry D.122

According to Danish Police reports a British aircraft, probably a Halifax, crashed at approximately 21.00 hours on the 14th March, 1944, into the sea near Harvig about 300 yards from the shore. Two members of the crew of this aircraft were identified and are buried at Bisbebjerg Cemetery, Copenhagen, they are:-

1. NZ.414286 Sgt. Harrap, H.R.

Pulled out of the wreck of the aircraft by a Danish fisherman on the 29th March, 1943, and buried by the Germans in Plot 10, Row 6, Line 1. Grave No. 47. He was identified by his identity disc.

2. Sgt. Sixsmith, A.C.

Washed ashore at Harvig on the 15th April, 1943, and found by the same fisherman as Harrap. He was identified by the Germans as above, and buried on the 19th April in Plot 10, Row 6, Line 2, Grave No. 133.

Three more bodies were washed ashore within one month in the vicinity of the crashed aircraft, and, according to Danish Police reports most probably belong to the same crew as Harrap and Sixsmith.

3. They were all buried in Bisbebjerg Cemetery in Plot 10, Row 6, Line 1, Grave No.'s 48, 49 and 50 respectively, adjacent to Sgt. Harrap's grave.

4. These graves were exhumed on the 18th November, 1946, and the results are as follows:-

Grave No. 49

Body washed ashore on the 15th March, 1943, at Harvig. Approximately 6' in height and of medium build with long black straight hair. The dress consisted of battledress blouse size 16, white aircrew pullover, blue civilian pullover. Khaki shirt with attached collar made by Tocke, Canada. sweat-shirt type undervest with blue collar. Cotton singlet made by Stanfields. Battledress trousers. Short airtex underpants, blue handknitted socks. civilian braces, sgt's chevrons and half brevet were torn away but outline could still be seen. Number 9133 was found written on cotton singlet as well as on sweat-shirt. These appear to be the last four figures of Sgt. Ross's personal number, and subject to your concurrence this grave will be registered as that of R79133 Sgt. Ross, D.R.

5. Grave No. 50

Body washed ashore also on the 15th March, 1943 at Harvig. Height 5' 10" approx build, thick set., hair reddish brown short and curly, fingers and hands large.

Teeth:	F F F X	F X
	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
	F F F F	X F F X

6. The body was dressed in battledress blouse, service dress trousers, blue polo neck pullover. Issue woollen vest, long woollen issue underpants. One silk flying glove. Civilian braces. R.C.A.F. shoulder flashes were found on battledress blouse, but F/S's crown and stripes were torn away, although the outlines could still be seen. As the only other Canadian of this crew is R130273 F/S Masson, E.S. it is suggested that this grave be accepted as his.

7. Grave No. 48

Body was washed ashore on the 21st March, 1943, at Harvig. The body was completely smashed. Clothing battledress blouse and trousers, RAF. issue pullover, traces of blue issue shirt, NCO.'s rank markings were torn away from battledress blouse.

8. It must be assumed that this is the body of 110714 F/S Smith, L.R. for the following reasons:

The only member of this crew unaccounted for is S/Sgt. Smith, L.R. as according to Danish Police reports the body of Sgt. Mairs was washed ashore on the 23rd April, 1943, at Harvig, approximately one month later, taken to Store Hedding Hospital and identified by his discs, and a driving license found on him. He was collected from there by the Germans. No burial details were made known to the Danish authorities.

9. There are eight other Unknowns at Bispebjerg Cemetery all of whom were found on 23/24th April, 1943, and buried on the 28th April, 1943. Seven of these are said to come from an aircraft crashed on the 20/21st April, 1943, near Korsor. Our 3MREU/C200/381/P.1 dated 23rd November, 1946.

10. Their graves were exhumed and their bodies found to be completely undressed. Consequently identification was impossible. But most of the bodies were badly burnt and obviously the victims of a land crash.

11. According to all records held at this Unit the only body washed ashore anywhere on the East coast of Zealand on the 23rd April, 1943, was that of 625386 Mairs T. Sgt.

12. If the aircraft referred to in our Casualty Enquiry DX.18/160 reference 3MREU/C200/381/P.1 dated 23rd November, 1946, can be identified, and the crew consisted of only seven members, it must be presumed that the Eight Unknown at Bispebjerg Cemetery is Sgt. Mairs, T.

13. It will then be possible to re-bury the eight bodies in one large communal grave, and mark it with the seven names of the crew and Sgt. Thomas Mairs.

14. Due to the completion of the work in Denmark in the very near future it is requested that the information called for please be sent to this section as soon as possible so that this case may be closed.

Squadron Leader, Commanding,
No. 18 Section, MRES. RAF.