

C O N F I D E N T I A L

HEADQUARTERS
13th EMERGENCY RESCUE GROUP
APO #719

Ditching report of C-47-B #43-47995, 2nd Emergency Rescue Squadron, 18 April 1945:

Emergency lack of fuel was recognized at approximately 0230I, 18 April 1945, when possible ditching was foreseen. At 0330 crew and passengers were told to prepare for ditching. All except emergency equipment was jettisoned. At 0415 crew and passengers ordered to take ditching positions. Positions taken; pilot, pilot's seat, co-pilot, co-pilot's seat, engineer, navigator, and passengers against bulkhead, navigators compartment.

Approximate position at this time was 133 miles from Biak, bearing 032° (lat 0°37' N, long 137°30' E). Altitude crew warned, 9000'. weather at ditching point: clear - scattered clouds 3-5000', visibility zero (due to darkness), wind velocity, 18 knots 330°, height of swell 10-12', distance crest to crest 40', extent of chop, very rough.

Rate of decent was 100' per minute, wheels retracted, no flaps used, engines functioning, final approach 80 mph, airspeed on impact 80 mph.

Landing was made at 80 mph directly into wind and into swells, aircraft in approximate three point position, approximate 18-20 in. of mercury 2400 rpm on engines. Instrument descent and landing. Plane skidded estimated 200'.

Ditching was completed at 0430. Pilot and co-pilot escaped through top hatch, remainder of crew and passengers escaped through cargo door. There was no injuries, and very little damage to aircraft.

Emergency equipment consisted of one five man, one seven man raft, and gibson girl radio. Rafts were inflated and moved away from plane. Plane floated 30 minutes.

At 0700 gibson girl set up and operating. At 1730, 18 April 1945, two C-47s homed in on gibson girl, dropped raft and pyrotechnics, also signalled that ship was on way to position.

Destroyer and hospital ship arrived at 2130, both had homed in on gibson girl. All personnel taken aboard hospital ship.

Fix was obtained by ground stations, Palau-Manus Is.-Biak-Darwin-Units of British Fleet.

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BASIC: Narrative report, 13th Emerg Res Gp, APO 719.

Crew:

Rohlfing, Robert L. 1st Lt (P)
Britton, Warner A. 2d Lt (CP)
Beavers, James E. 2d Lt (N)
Brim, Onis W. Sgt (E)

Passengers:

Mekeon, Donald F. 2d Lt
Wollum, Henry M. 2d Lt
Carothers, Arthur G. 2d Lt
Labontg, William J. 2d Lt
Mellstrom, Levern, M. 2d Lt
Greenfogel, Maurice Sgt
Quinn, Joseph M. Cpl
Ludwig, Ernest Cpl

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