



Personal info

Full name

CHRISTENSEN, Willard Melvin

Date of birth

17 March 1919

Age

25

Place of birth

Cavalier County, North Dakota

Hometown

Parsons, Labette County, Kansas

Military service

Service number

37094312

Rank

Staff Sergeant

Unit

**331st Bombardment Squadron,
94th Bombardment Group, Heavy**

Awards

**Purple Heart,
Air Medal**

Death & Grave

Status

Killed in Action

Date of death

19 May 1944

Cemetery

American War Cemetery Margraten

Walls of the Missing

Immediate family

Members

Albert Christensen (father)
Agnes J. Christensen (mother)
Fred Christensen (brother)
Bert Christensen (brother)
Teresa Christensen (sister)
Blanche Christensen (sister)
Ole Christensen (brother)
Alton Christensen (brother)
Manley Christensen (brother)
Buelah Christensen (sister)

Plane data

Serial number

42-31540

Data

Type: B-17G
Nickname: Miss Donna Mae II
Destination: Berlin, Germany
Mission: Bombing of the city
MACR: 4946

More information

The plane had 10 crew members and 1 passenger, T/Sgt John B. Davis, on board. The airplane was hit by a 1000 lb. bomb from an aircraft flying overhead in the High Squadron. The tail section of the aircraft was broken off and the aircraft went down in what appeared to be a straight nose dive. One wing was observed to fall off when the aircraft was about 13,000 feet. Two parachutes were observed. This accident occurred directly over the target on signal of bombs away.

The entire crew of 11 was killed and first buried at the POW Cemetery in Elsgrund-Döberitz between 24 and 31 May 1944. In June 1951 an investigation was conducted to find several American deceased at the grounds where the POW Cemetery of Döbertiz was situated. The former caretaker, however, stated that the Americans exhumed their remains in 1947, in 1948 the French and in 1949 the Italians, Germans and Russians completely exhumed the cemetery. This was done systematically, field by field, row by row. In late 1949 the former cemetery site was returned to its German owner. In 1951 it was planted with potatoes. The conclusion of the investigation was that when the cemetery finally was disinterred all remains left, were evacuated to Russian or German Honor cemeteries and buried in unmarked graves.

Photos



Source of information: Raf Dyckmans, Mireille Goedhart, Terry Hirsch, www.wwiimemorial.com, [Footnote](#), www.findagrave.com - kateb, www.ancestry.com - 1930 census / 1940 census, IDPF of Herald R. Boyd

Photo source: Peter Schouteten, Mr. Kent Amoth