



Personal info

Full name

SPELL, Ira Lee

Date of birth

18 February 1923

Age

21

Place of birth

Piney Green, Sampson County, North Carolina

Hometown

Autryville, Sampson County, North Carolina

Military service

Service number

14188306

Rank

Sergeant

Unit

**715th Bombardment Squadron,
448th Bombardment Group, Heavy**

Awards

**Purple Heart,
Air Medal**

Death & Grave

Status

Missing in Action

Date of death

19 April 1944

Cemetery

American War Cemetery Ardennes

Tablets of the Missing

Immediate family

Members

George G. Spell (father)
Lizzie C. Hair (mother)
Eula B. Spell (sister)
Lola M. Spell (sister)
Arie D. Spell (sister)
Cora B. Spell (sister)
Berthelma Spell (sister)
O'Thelma Spell (sister)
William E. Spell (brother)
Dora F. Spell (sister)
George R. Spell (brother)

Plane data

Serial number

41-29565

Data

Type: B-24H
Destination: Watten, France
Mission: Bombing of the V1 launch site
MACR: 4303

More information

Sgt Ira L. Spell worked in a textile factory.

He volunteered for the Air Corps of the Army of the United States at Fort Bragg, North Carolina on 7 February 1942.

Statement of S/Sgt Russell E. Towsley, a crew member of another airplane in the group:

"We were flying at approximately 19000 feet on the let down coming over the French coast in the vicinity of Dunkirk. The left-waist gunner called me at approximately 1715 hours and pointed out flames coming from the #4 engine of A/C 41-29565. We continued to watch the ship and after a few minutes it went into a long glide. During this glide the fire appeared to go out. At what I would judge to be around 11,000 feet the blaze broke out again. At this time the ship went into a spin, the right wing (part of it at least) broke off and the fire spread over the entire left side of the ship. The A/C exploded just before hitting the water. We saw four chutes come from the plane just as the fire broke out the second time (11,000 feet). Three of the chutes appeared to land in the water and the fourth on the coast of France."

The airplane was hit by flak over the target, which resulted in a fire in the bomb bay and two streams of gasoline flowing from the right wing.

Nine crew members were killed in the crash or drowned. T/Sgt Ernest W. Robinson Jr. was picked up ten miles off the French coast but died of his wounds on 22 April 1944

Photos



Source of information: Raf Dyckmans, www.fold3.com - MACR, www.aircrewremembered.com

Photo source: FOHF, Daniel Laurie