

Nikles, Rudolf

Rank & Serial No.: A/1C; AF 12883404
Orgn & Duty: 28th Bomb Sq, 19th Bomb Gp;
Left Gunner

Act Type & No.: B-29; 44-62011A

Identifying Data:

Birth Date. 25 December 1932

Race. Caucasian

Eyes: hazel; *Hair:* brown; *Height:* 5'6½";

Weight: 131 lbs.

Distinguishing Marks. Appendectomy scar.

Circumstances of Loss:

1. Reported MIA 30 December 1952.

2. B-29 was attacked by enemy fighters near Taosong-Dong. It bombed the target and turned southward on a heading of about 160 degrees, still under enemy attack. At 2142, the final radio report stated "crew bailing out." A Marine pilot, Capt Oliver R. Davis, following the B-29 heard the bailout order and two minutes later observed the aircraft crash about 25 miles north of Pyong-

yang. He did not observe any parachutes although he remained in the area for 20 minutes. Search and rescue efforts located wreckage, presumably that of the B-29.

Subsequent Reports:

1. Five of the twelve crew members survived and were repatriated during "Big Switch." One of them, Donald G. Swalls, stated that he was taken to a compound in the village of Obul and there met 1st Lt Paul I. Wilcox, radar observer in his crew, who told him that one of the Chinese officers said they had found three bodies in the front of the B-29 and one in the rear, but that the bodies were burned beyond recognition and no identification could be found. No information was received from Lt Wilcox to verify this.

2. Repatriate crew member A/2C Leland H. Van Slyke indicated Airman Nikles last seen in the aircraft just prior to bailout.

Conclusion:

Airman Nikles may have decided to stay with the aircraft until it was too late for successful bailout. The facts at hand do not, however, rule out the possibility that he jumped successfully and was later captured.

Personal History:

Birthplace. Oberadling, Hungary

Cities of Residence. Oberadling, Hungary; New York, N.Y.

Marital Status. Single.

Parents. [REDACTED]

Civilian Schools. Grammar School, Germany, 1947; High School, Troy, N.Y., 1951.

Military Schools. Lowry AFB, Colo. (armament school, turret system mechanic Jan. 52); Lowry AFB, Colo. (armament school, flexible gunnery, Mar. 52).

Previous Occupation. Student.

Languages. Speaks, reads, and writes fluent German.