

Crash of Crew 15 - Lt. (jg) Evans - Plane
22 March 1945 - North of Amoy, China

Report of War Correspondent, Don Bell

Excerpt From VPB119 1944-1945 Command History File

On 22 March, just 20 days after the squadron had flown its first patrol out of Clark Field, Lt.(jg) V.J. Evans was shot down by anti-aircraft fire. He managed to make a forced landing off of Quemoy Island, and together with 5 members of his crew and one passenger made his way to the mainland with the aid of Chinese Guerillas. The passenger, Don Bell, Mutual Broadcasting Company Correspondent who had just been released from the Japanese Concentration Camp at Santo Tomas University in Manila was making his first flight after his liberation. Lt.(jg) Evans and party walked their way inland to Kunming where after a good rest they were able to get transportation back to Manila. (Don Bell's story appears in appendix supplement-A).

Incident Description in March, 1945 War Diary

(c) On 22 March, Lt(jg) V. J. EVANS, flying PB4Y-2 Bu No. 59426, failed to return from a routine search and reconnaissance mission to the China Coast. Special search planes were dispatched but failed to find any trace of the missing plane or crew. On 26 March 1945, ComNavGroup China advised by despatch that Lt(jg) EVANS was shot down two miles north of Amoy, China. The following members of the flight crew were reported to be safe in the hands of friendly forces:

EVANS, Virgil J., Lt(jg), (A1), USNR, 240716.
LINDSLEY, Kirby J. Jr., (A1), USNR, 378785.
PEARCE, John R. Jr., AMMF1c, 563 73 31, V-6, USNR.
WARR, James A., ARM1c(T), 563 01 64, V-6, USNR. (Seriously Wounded)
WALKER, Maurice L., ARM3c, 865 89 40, V-6, USNR.
REIS, Ernest F., S1c(AGM), 816 73 90, SV V-6, USNR.
BELL, W., (accredited press correspondent - passenger).

The following members of the flight crew are reported to be dead:

GREENE, Francis W., Ensign, (A1), USNR, 378771.
JENSON, Robert J., AMMF2c, 866 07 81, SV V-6, USNR.
WILSON, Andrew J., AMMF2c, 337 70 35, USN.
MEO, Nicholas J., AGM3c, 814 31 87, V-6, USNR.
DOSS, James L., AGM2c, (AB), 844 28 18, SV USN.
GIPSON, Calvin C., S1c(AMM), 859 39 82, SV V-6, USNR.