

Fields of Honor Memorial

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Fields of Honor
Foundation



Personal info

Full name

WOLFE, Emmett Leroy

Date of birth

24 November 1923

Age

21

Place of birth

**Edwardsville, Luzerne County,
Pennsylvania**

Hometown

Edwardsville, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania

Military service

Service number

33603438

Rank

Sergeant

Unit

**47th Squadron,
313th Troop Carrier Group**

Awards

**Purple Heart,
Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster**

Death & Grave

Status

Killed in Action

Date of death

24 March 1945

Cemetery

American War Cemetery Margraten

Plot	Row	Grave
G	21	2

Immediate family

Members

Le Roy Wolfe (father)

Bertha M. (Lewis) Wolfe (mother)

Margarete Wolfe (sister)

Bertha M. Wolfe (sister)

Dorothy L. Wolfe (sister)

Plane data

Serial number

44-77581

Data

Type: C-46D

Destination: Drop zone X, north of Wesel, Germany

Mission: Paratrooper drop

MACR: 13420

More information

Emmett Wolfe worked in a machine shop.

He enlisted in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, on 13 April 1943.

The airplane was hit by flak and was on fire just after the paratroopers were dropped. It went into a bank and crashed in the vicinity of the drop zone. It exploded when it hit the ground.

One crew member bailed out and returned to duty, three men of the crew were killed.

In addition to the crew, there were 26 passengers on board, 25 paratroopers of the 513th Parachute Infantry Regiment and one photographer, 2nd Lt Charles A. Higgins Jr., who was also killed in the crash.

The surviving crew member, T/Sgt Edward J. Gardner, gave the following statement: "We had been lagging slightly behind the formation as we approached the Rhine. We were flying #3 ship of the third element, second section of nine, second serial. We came into the DZ on course and encountered heavy fire from the edge of the woods west of the DZ. Just before we reached the DZ (we had not dropped our troops), I saw #2 ship in an element in front of us nose down toward the ground and hit and explode at short distance west of the DZ. It was in an open field. I had seen no fire or smoke coming from this plane prior to its crash.

We encountered some small arms fire over the DZ but got all of our troops and bundles off over the DZ, dropping on our Flight Leader. I then noticed that our flaps would not come back up, which slowed us up and forced us to drop behind the formation. After we made the right turn, very heavy fire broke loose. One shell came through the left door, glanced off my helmet, made a large hole in the right side of the fuselage. We were trying to climb out, but were not making much progress. The flaps seemed to stay about a half to a quarter down. Lt Higgins had refused to put on his flak suit or chute, saying it interfered with his taking the pictures. As we flew over the woods on the way west toward the Rhine through the heavy fire, I threw Lt Higgins on top of his flak suit and got on top of him to afford some protection. A few seconds later I looked into the cockpit and all I could see was smoke. Sgt Wolfe and Lt Weiser came out of the cockpit and had walked about to the end of the navigator's table. Flames were shooting out of the cockpit into the cabin. The flames seemed to be coming out of the trap door behind the pilot's seat. These flames may have caught Lt Weiser's chute when he passed through. About that time Lt Blendinger turned around and gave Lt Weiser a message of some kind and Sgt Wolfe yelled at Lt Higgins and me to bail out. Just before this, I had looked into the cockpit, and it seemed to me that Lt Blendinger was trying to set the automatic pilot.

Before I bailed out, I told the photographer to put his chute on and bail out. I was nearest to the door when the bailout order came, so went out first. Just before I went out, I saw Lt Higgins reaching for his chute. Sgt Wolfe and Lt Weiser were on the way to the door. After I bailed out, my back was to the plane all the way down, and I saw neither what happened to the plane or whether any other chutes came out. I landed in an open area perhaps 200 yards from the Rhine near a large brown house."

Photos



Source of information: Raf Dyckmans, www.wwiimemorial.com, www.fold3.com - MACR, www.ancestry.com - Veteran Compensation Application File / 1940 Census

Photo source: www.findagrave.com, Des Philippet, Maurice Gorissen