

Email from Thomas Südbeck on April 2, 2025 (slightly edited for English grammar) regarding efforts to determine the correct flight formation on the Memmingen Mission given several divergent historical records:

The 100% evidence was only known by the pilots and airmen. We talked to the only then-living pilot. Ludwig Hauber met pilot Stanton Rickey personally in the U.S. and gave him parts of his Fortress. Rickey unfortunately passed away a couple of years ago at age 101.

Pilot Combs' Fortress definitely flew the tailend Charley position in box 4 of the formation at the rear of his 816th squadron. They were messed up first and very badly! It was the first one down! Parts of his plane rained down at Egg below Waltenhofen.

German fighter pilot Unger shot down the next fortress in the middle of box 4 right in front of the Combs bomber before Unger was shot down and escaped by parachuting. It was pilot Gussarson's plane. His bomber landed only a few kilometers away nearby in a forest and exploded 15 minutes after impact. Even today we are still finding artefacts! I was personally there and we dug up plenty of parts! My friend even found the wings of Pilot Gussarson there!

[The 483rd Bomb Group (H) Association archives document] has in box 3 lead the pilot Boggs, but who is Boggs? That's not the case because when the lead plane of the formation piloted by Clark of the 817th squadron was shot down, pilot Smith on his left wanted to take the lead but was then shot down by an eyewitness account.

That shows that the Coogler report, as provided by Ludwig Hauber, is the correct one!

By the way, Hattenhauer's plane was the most shot up plane to ever return to Sterparone.

[The 483rd Bomb Group (H) Association archives document] shows pilot Gaum in the middle of box 4! It is another misspelling as it is Gunn. His fortress exploded over Schwarzerd. German pilot Unger could not have shot down pilot Gunn over Buchenberg as he was shot down before Gunn went down. Gussarson must have been in the middle of this box!

Anyway, a more detailed investigation is not possible. We know for sure where each crash site was of each documented pilot. And the correct names!