

USAAF Personnel Killed in Action and Buried at the American Cemetery in Münsingen Switzerland, 1943-1945

The first USAAF crewman to die on Swiss soil was S/Sgt. Joseph F. Maloney, the ball turret gunner from the B-17 "Raunchy." He died on September 6, 1943 but his body was not recovered until "Raunchy" was raised from the bottom of Lake Constance. On October 1, 1943 a Swiss anti-aircraft detachment shot down the B-17s "Sugarfoot" and "Rangy Lil" after their group formation crossed into Swiss airspace three miles from the Swiss-Austrian border. Seven crewmen from "Sugarfoot" and six from "Rangy Lil" were killed. On October 5, 1943 the bodies of the fourteen Americans, including Joseph Maloney, were buried with full military honors at Bad Ragaz. All the Internees then in Switzerland attended, along with Gen. Legge, the U.S. Military Attaché to Switzerland, the Polish and British Military Attachés, and other guests.

Flag draped coffins of the first 14 USAAF crewmen buried in Switzerland



Internees leaving the funeral at Bad Ragaz. At the right is 1st Lt. Alva "Jake" Geron, followed by 2nd Lt. Floyd "Mac" MacSpadden

From the time of the burial at Bad Ragaz until early summer of 1944 American Airmen had been buried at several locations around Switzerland. On October 21, 1943 the War Department approved the purchase of property for an American Cemetery in Switzerland. The sale of land alongside an existing cemetery at Münsingen for \$12,000 (60,000 Swiss francs at the time) was finalized on June 5, 1944. All of the bodies buried at various locations were then relocated to this piece of property at Münsingen and the cemetery was dedicated.

**Funeral at Bad Ragaz, Switzerland
October 5, 1944**

S/Sgt Joseph F. Maloney
off of "Raunchy"

Crew of "Sugarfoot"

1st Lt. Burton C. English
2nd Lt. Donald M. Prentice
2nd Lt. Stanley L. Finseth
2nd Lt. Irvine B. Patten
T/Sgt. Peter B. Malchiodi
S/Sgt. Charles R. Burgett

S/Sgt. Elmer D. Wheadon

Cantwell's Crew

T/Sgt. Jessie Maddox
Sgt. Saturino Chavez
Sgt. Murray R. Phillips
Sgt. Gordon R. Schenkelberger
Sgt. K. A. Higginbotham
S/Sgt. Herbbert McArdell

Baur, Switzerland, March 20, 1944

The Swiss military funeral for Robert Williams included a Guard of Honor and a band (on the right). The Polish and British military delegations also attended.



Funeral procession at Münsingen,
Switzerland – Perhaps the funeral of
Donald Rowley

(Raymond Baus)

The cemetery was designed by a Swiss architect and approved by the American Legation in Bern. The cemetery was constructed by a group of Internees from Adelboden under the leadership of 2nd Lt. F. E. "Mac" MacSpadden. The architect provided two Swiss laborers to act as foreman, helper and interpreter. The group performed all facets of the construction including quarrying the rock.

Münsingen Cemetery before construction was started

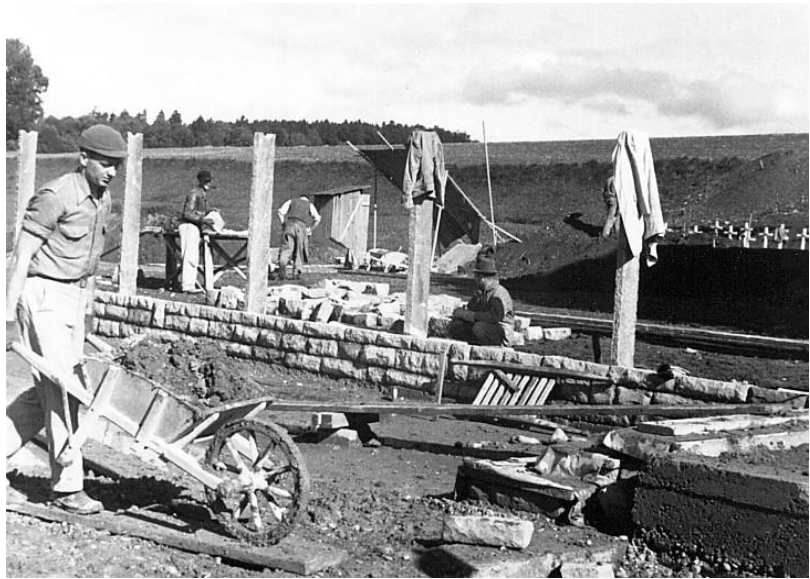


The following pictures depict the cemetery from its inception until this group suspended construction in December of 1944. At that time most of this crew escaped from Switzerland to avoid being put in prison for subversive acts. The group was headquartered at the Lowen Hotel in Münsingen. They also acted as a burial detail for all additional funerals. The original group was made up of the following personnel: 2nd Lt. F. E. MacSpadden, 2nd Lt. Maurice O'Connell, and Sgts. Joe Januszewski, George Snyder, Elvio Roscetti, Christy Zullo, Henry Hergesheimer, Donald Chase, Willis Million, Leonard Goyer and Carter Thornton. As some of the personnel were repatriated and/or left they were replaced by Joe Krajewski and others. Christy Zullo stayed at Münsingen as a caretaker and was there until the cemetery was completed in 1945.



Quarrying rock at Marsens

Carter Thornton working in foreground



Memorial plaque installed at the American Military Cemetery at Münsingen, Switzerland:

“ENSHRINED FOREVER
IN THE HEARTS
OF THEIR COUNTRYMEN
HERE LIE OUR GALLANT
DEAD

Comrades in Arms USAAF”

After the end of WW II the U.S. Government decided to reduce the number of American cemeteries overseas. The sixty-one USAAF crewmen buried at Münsingen were exhumed and reburied at the American Cemetery at Epinal, France; Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, or another cemetery of the family’s choosing. To the credit of the Swiss they have kept the grounds as a cemetery, retained the overall construction appearance and acknowledge that it was at one time an American Military Cemetery. Because of this, at least 50 years later it is still remembered that Americans were once buried here.

The Swiss Internees Association, Inc. (SIAI) began searching for the original memorial plaque placed at the American Military Cemetery at Münsingen. It was removed from the cemetery wall when the Americans were disinterred in 1948. Colonel Boston, the U.S. Air Attaché in Bern, Switzerland, was contacted in 1992 regarding the location of the plaque. He responded that the Ambassador had found it in the back of a closet at the U.S. Embassy in Bern.

Memorial plaque presented by
Ambassador Leland Harrison on
May 13, 1946



In early 1987 Swiss Colonel Werner Düdli requested that the American Embassy clean and remount the plaque below. When he received no reply after several requests, Colonel Düdli paid to have the plaque cleaned and remounted. When the Swiss Internees Association, Inc. made its first return trip to Switzerland in September 1987, Colonel Düdli was presented with a sum of money equal to his costs to preserve the memorial plaque. He, in turn, donated the money to the International Red Cross.



Plaque on the wall of the
cemetery today

Internees Assigned to Münsingen Cemetery

1 st Lt. F. E. "Mac" MacSpadden	0-737977	Crew # 5
2 nd Lt. Maurice O'Connell	0-670219	Crew # 5
S/Sgt. Joseph Januszewski	35308932	Crew # 5
T/Sgt. George E. Snyder	32077474	Crew # 5
S/Sgt. Elvio "Al" Roscetti	12045416	Crew # 5
T/Sgt. Henry E. Hergishiemer	10600482	Crew # 5

T/Sgt Leonard Goyer	19097626	Crew # 3
T/Sgt. Willis Million		Crew # 12
S/Sgt. Donald N. Chase	16019390	Crew # 12
S/Sgt. Carter Thornton	18133986	Crew # 8
S/Sgt. Christy Zullo	33349468	Crew # 11
S/Sgt. Malcolm E. Brandt	35494204	Crew # 16
S/Sgt. Robert L. Modell	32727377	Crew # 16
S/Sgt. Joseph Z. Krajewski	42008086	Crew # 140
Capt. Lawrence F. McGuire	0-24860	Crew # 49
S/Sgt. Frank L. Lanman	19177659	Crew # 42
T/Sgt. Coleman R. Hodges	14097318	Crew # 49
T/Sgt. Robert L McReynolds	16169703	Crew # 49
S/Sgt. Eddie R. King	34253408	Crew # 49
S/Sgt. Anthony M Caputo	11033686	Crew # 49
S/Sgt. Stanley J. Pustelnik	31170317	Crew # 49

Provided by Joe Krajewski

**Memorial Day, American Cemetery
Münsingen, Switzerland, May 30, 1944**



Memorial Day, American Cemetery Münsingen, Switzerland, May 30, 1944

Lt. Dean Rexford, of the Legation staff, summarized the dedication and memorial service.

“Memorial Day, combined with a ceremony dedicating the new American Military Cemetery at Münsingen, was observed on May 30th. In attendance were: the American Military Attaché, his staff, a delegation of American internees and escapees, members of the Legation at Berne, the Consuls General of Zurich and Basel, Americans living in Berne and vicinity, Brigadier Cartwright, the British Military Attaché, and Colonel du Pasquier of the Swiss Internment Service accompanied by Lieutenant Picot of the same service.

After the invocation by Dr. Strong, the Honorable Leland Harrison, the American Minister, addressed the gathering, including in his talk part of the Lincoln’s Gettysburg address.

A memorial tablet dedicated by the internees and escapees was then unveiled by Major Strader, Senior American Air Officer in Switzerland. It is of copper and bears the same inscription as the plaques at the National Cemetery in Arlington: ‘Enshrined for ever in the hearts of their countrymen – Here lie our gallant dead’.

General Legge then called the roll of the dead. At each name, a comrade of the dead man stepped from the ranks of the internees drawn up in formation at the outside edge of the cemetery and responded: ‘Died for his Country.’ This was repeated 32 times – since the dead from Ragaz, Baar and Basel had previously been transferred to the new Münsingen Cemetery. Taps followed and then the Stars and Stripes, which had been at half mast, was raised to the top. The impressiveness of the ceremony is attested to perhaps more tellingly than it could be in any other way by the following excerpt from the program of the Rotary Club Berne:

‘The Americans today celebrate their Memorial Day. This is a national Memorial Day in honor of the fallen soldiers. The impressive celebration took place in connection with the dedication of the new American military cemetery in Münsingen. Münsingen lies like a piece of fairyland among its fruit trees and its rolling fields, a picture of utmost peace. Near the old cemetery stand two rows of white crosses above which a flag pole rises. On the flagpole the banner of the United States flies at half mast. The Stars and Stripes flutter in the breeze. The whole American colony is present. Beautiful wreaths decorated with the American colors have been laid upon the graves. Minister Harrison made a speech after which General Legge called the roll. He called out thirty-two names. At each name, a surviving American pilot and comrade stepped forward and said: “Died for his country.”’

Thirty-two simple military crosses made a long row and are an evident symbol of much grief and sorrow. How infinitely great, however, must be the sorrow and suffering in the whole world, for there are not only thirty-two but millions and

millions of such crosses in all the countries of the world. Sleep well your last rest in peaceful earth, brave soldiers from a great distance. May your blood not have been shed in vain.



After dedication of the cemetery
("Mac" MacSpadden)

THE 61 DEAD AMERICAN AIRMEN BURIED AT MUENSINGEN (SWITZERLAND) 1944 - 1948

	Date	Name	First Name	Serial	Break-down	1 st Burial	Münsingen Grave No	Final Rest	Pl./Row/Gr.
1	6.9.43	Moloney	Joseph J.	11088023	KIA	Ragaz	26	Epinal	B /02/13
2	1.10.43	Burgett	Charles R.	32381824	KIA	Ragaz	10	NY	
3	1.10.43	Malchiodi	Peter B.	31118574	KIA	Ragaz	11	Epinal	B / 44 / 33
4	1.10.43	Wheadon	Elmer D.	11040542	KIA	Ragaz	12	MA	
5	1.10.43	Patten	Irving P.	0-735143	KIA	Ragaz	13	Epinal	B/45/21
6	1.10.43	Finseth	Stanley L.	0-736847	KIA	Ragaz	14	MN	
7	1.10.43	Prentice	Donald M.	0-670603	KIA	Ragaz	15	NY	
8	1.10.43	English	Burton C.	0-665670	KIA	Ragaz	16	IA	
9	1.10.43	Higginbotam	Kenneth A.	18069421	KIA	Ragaz	27	WY	
10	1.10.43	Maddox	Jesse G. Jr.	15113057	KIA	Ragaz	28	KY	
11	1.10.43	Schenkelberger	Gordon	32427345	KIA	Ragaz	29	N-NY	
12	1.10.43	Chavez	Saturino	18035297	KIA	Ragaz	30	Epinal	B / 45 / 10
13	1.10.43	McArdell	Herbert	17109194	KIA	Ragaz	31	Epinal	B / 30 / 41
14	1.10.43	Phillips	Murray R.	35490827	KIA	Ragaz	32	Epinal	B / 36 / 49
15	14.10.43	Rowley	Donald T.	0-747142	DIED	Basel	24	CA	
16	16.3.44	Williams	Robert	744117	KIA	Baar	25	IN	
17	26.3.44	Miltner	Robert F.	39827755	DIED		9	PA	
18	24.4.44	Harris	Russell	18176858	KIA		1	Epinal	B / 34 / 49
	Date	Name	First Name	Serial	Break-down	1 st Burial	Münsingen Grave No	Final Rest	Pl./Row/Gr.
19	24.4.44	Hardy	Raymond H.	31175660	KIA		2	NH	

20	24.4.44	Calabrese	Pasquale A.	32455406	KIA		3	NY	
21	24.4.44	Lewis	Ned E.	T-1 835	KIA		4	IA	
22	24.4.44	Thomas	Martin J.	0-726089	KIA		5	OK	
23	24.4.44	Snapp	Myron P.	0-812618	KIA		6	IL	
24	24.4.44	King	James E.	0-748427	KIA		7	NH	
25	24.4.44	Lowery	William H.	35528962	KIA		22	Epinal	B / 43 / 21
26	24.4.44	Laperriere	Urvin J.	11055368	KIA		20	MA	
27	24.4.44	Scefonas	Felix J.	12022429	KIA		19	NY	
28	24.4.44	Bailey	Everett L.	0-672296	KIA		8	OK	
29	24.4.44	Sendlbeck	Richard M.	12131654	KIA		17	NY	
30	24.4.44	Greenebaum	Jesse L.	0-688525	KIA		18	NJ	
31	24.4.44	Melazzi	Anthony T. Ji	12006182	KIA		21	N-NY	
32	24.4.44	Pratt	Sidney J.	16116560	KIA		23	W 1	
33	10.7.44	Dorgan	Robert E,	0-741307	ACC.		33	OH	
34	12.7.44	Schilling	Edward A.	0-716676	KIA		34	PA	
35	12.7.44	Levine	Melvin L.	0-703504	KIA		35	NE	
36	12.7.44	Kerr	Gerald L.	0-758456	KIA		36	TX	
37	12,7.44	Lindskoog	Arthur H.	0-817715	KIA		41	Epinal	A / 42 / 20
38	19.7.44	Horetski	Frank V.	36555710	KIA		37	Epinal	B / 02 / 12
39	19.7.44	Ballbach	Michael W.	0-757641	KIA		42	Epinal	B / 35 / 49
40	20.7.44	Boardsen	John A.	36380956	KIA		40	IA	
41	20.7.44	Darragh	Charles D.	20953828	KIA		38	N-CA	
42	21.7.44	Hoffmann	Leo J. J r.	13173525	KIA		39	PA	
43	20.7.44	Smith	Castleton D.	0-750225	DIED		43	N-MO	
44	19.8.44	Shearer	Alfred M.	0-733477	ACC		44	Arlington	
45	16.10.44	Stotts	James D.	18074770	DIED		45	TX	
46	25.12.44	Mackoul	Nicholas	0-556083	KIA		46	Epinal	A / 44 / 20
47	25.12.44	Homistek	Martin A.	0-2069022	KIA		47	PA	
48	25.12.44	Coulsen	Ralph L.	37519787	KIA		48	Arlington	
49	20.1.45	McCowan	John J.	3279876	Frozen		49	NY	
50	20.1.45	Lundgren	Donald E.	31259248	Frozen		50	MA	
51	5.2.45	Skoba	John E.	T-1 29305	KIA		55	SD	
52	25.2.45	Sheperd	Robert S. Jr.	17028029	KIA		51	Epinal	B / 44 / 16
53	25.2.45	Aplanalp	Charles R.	0-831624	KIA		52	I L	
54	21.3.45	Callaway	Charles R.	T-6424	KIA		53	AL	
	Date	Name	First Name	Serial	Break-down	1 st Burial	Münsingen Grave No	Final Rest	Pl./Row/Gr.
55	16.4.45	Reid	Raymond W.	0-822090	KIA		54	Epinal	B / 46 / 10
56	18.8.45	Holt	S. M. P.	34811242	FI.		56	TE	

57	18.8.45	Case	George H.	16101353	Acc. Fl. Acc.		57	IL	
58	18.8.45	Smith	Thomas E.	0-792168	Fl. Acc.		58	N-MN	
59	18.8.45	Neisser	Robert P.	0-607083	Fl. Acc.		59	MD	
60		McKenna	Thomas				60		
61		Husted	Clark E.	Civilian			61	Epinal	A / 30 / 54

The following two men were crew members in aircraft which downed in Switzerland, but they were not buried at MOnsingen American Cemetery.

18.3.44	Wagner	Frederick	32516123	KIA	Germany	n.a.	Lorraine	E / 22 / 42
Bailed out over German Territory and was killed by malfunction of his parachute. Was buried in Germany.								
24.4.44	Burry	James	0-810817	KIA		n.a.	N-SC	
His body was rescued 1953, when the aircraft was lifted from the ground of lake Greifensee.								

Questions to Nr.:

- 43 The exact day he died?
- 49 State of origin?
- 56 Is he really in Epinal? A first check in Epinal was negative. We shall check again.
In the official Swiss report of the accident the initials of his Christian names were S.M.P.
and he was resident in Nashville (Tennessee) Fatherland Street 1813.
- 60 We found only this name. Date of death? Serial No.? Cause of death? State of origin?
- 61 Date he died and cause of death?