

MISSING IN SOUTH ATLANTIC

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Was reported even in Australia

Note in "The Mail"

In a note in the Australian newspaper "The Mail", of Adelaide, edition of February 20, 1943, on the first page, reports that a small life raft, rubber, bearing the body of Major Arthur Mills, a member of " Army Air Corps Ferry Command ", derived to a beach near Natal, Brazil. According to United Press correspondent stationed in Natal, the note added that the boat had neither food nor water, and the same had probably followed the drift by more than 1,000 miles across the South Atlantic. Pointed to note that Major Mills struggled to survive because the small boat had fish bones and one of those traditional emblems of an eagle (which the Americans put the caps of officers during World War II) was transformed into a makeshift hook. More significant was the fact that it have been found with the body, six "Dog tags", indicating that six other airmen had died, probably in the boat, amid a tremendous agony of thirst and hunger. The names of these six victims were not disclosed. Accra Airfield, the busy allied base from where C-87 departed for a no return flight. Since the newspaper "The Sydney Morning Herald", issue on 24 January 1943, the eighth page, find the news that follows. Two members (RAAF) Royal Australian Air Force - Royal Australian Air Force, the pilot W. T. B. Sergeant Smithson and H. V. Lamb, and twelve British and thirteen Americans were missing due to the loss of a U.S. transport plane in the South Atlantic. The note stated that the body of Major Arthur Mills, had been taken on a life raft for the Brazilian coast .

The note ended, that some of the personal property of other airmen were found in the raft. An Old Book Helps Understand This Episode Then I remembered that a friend in Recife has a copy of the book "The eagle in the egg" and could have anything about this case. Written in 1949 by Lieutenant Colonel Oliver La Farge, and published by Houghton Biffin Company, of Boston, this stuff back with 319 pages detailing the history of the ATC - Air Transport Command (Air Transport Command), which was the agency that developed the network of aircraft, airports, airfields, and the whole structure of the U.S. air transport during World War II. The investigation that followed found that Captain Elwes was one of the best pilots to fly over Africa, he was not tired, had not been drinking the night before the mission in Accra. The records show that the behavior of the crew before the flight was unchanged. The usual inspection occurred before takeoff and the engines were in great condition.

The book claims that the plane was relatively new service without having flown in an excessive way. Furthermore there was no unusual incident and not a message was received from the plane after they moved on. At my request he did a search and found on page 194, that just before midnight on January 17, 1943, a transport aircraft model Consolidated C-87 "Liberator Express", registration number 41-1708, took off from African city of Accra, the former Gold Coast, now Ghana, towards Natal. Its pilot was Captain Orval Eknes Mijkpen and he basically carried passengers. Tells the book that because of a good and strong tail wind, Captain Elwes planned to make the trip nonstop, just flying over the island of Ascension, a volcanic rock in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, belonging to England and also an important air base support. But this plane just disappeared.

At noon on Jan. 18, began the search of the aircraft along the route which, although hampered by bad weather, continued until January 30, 1943, both through the air, as by the military seeking signals in the Brazilian coast from the sea .

In 31 days the search was officially closed and no wreckage was found. On February 5, a Friday, nineteen days after the C-87 41-1708 be taken off the night in Accra, the Brazilian soldiers in Ponta Negra, including Clovis Ramalho Ribeiro Dantas, spotted a life raft which was the dehydrated body of Major Arthur Mills.

Included in "The eagle in the egg," that men who suffered on the waters of the Atlantic, even though they had a book, no records or documents were left to unravel the mystery of the disappearance of C-87.

Interestingly, the author confirmed the note in the Australian newspaper, that there were bones and a distinctive cap of colonel, turned into a hook.

To Lieutenant Colonel La Farge, it was evident that the plane had landed successfully in the water and the men on board (or part thereof) should have successfully managed to evacuate the stricken aircraft, but in great haste, but apparently did not bring all their survival equipment on the raft. Detail of one C-87 derived from a B-24 Liberator. Newspapers reports the crash and details of the findings. For the book's author, Lieutenant Colonel La Farge, a likely explanation was that this accident could have been any problem with the fuel on board or the C-87 could have been knocked down by a German submarine, which still with faulty conditions managed to land.

These are only theories. The truth about what really happened to the C-87 "Liberator Express" will probably never be known. Source: www.tokdehistoria.wordpress.com