

Monday, November 20, 1995

SD-FPJ

Refno : 0691
 Name : PATTERSON, JAMES KELLY
 Idate : 5/19/67
 LossRank : O4
 Service : N
 Ctry : VN
 Province : HA SON BINH
 Status : XX
 OffscopeCase : N
 PriorityCase : Y
 FateDetermined : Y

Casesum Narrative : On 19 May 67, LT James K. Patterson, bombardier/navigator and LCDR Eugene B. McDaniel, pilot, were flying an A-6A aircraft, in a flight of six on a combat mission whose target was about five miles south of Hanoi, North Vietnam. As the flight traveled northeast toward the target, there was a warning of a missile launch. The flight took evasive action. While making a slow, right roll to match the leader's wing, LCDR McDaniel suddenly jettisoned his ordnance and started a very rapid right roll. A missile detonated between the REFNO 0691 aircraft and the number four aircraft in the flight. The REFNO 0691 aircraft was observed in a glide, trailing white smoke. Both crewmembers ejected at approximately 204200N 1052300E, and two good parachutes were sighted. Upon landing, voice contact was established with both crew members. LCDR McDaniel reported that he was okay, but LT Patterson reported that he had a badly broken leg. Because of enemy forces and air defense in the area, Search and Rescue (SAR) efforts were not immediately initiated. The next day SAR aircraft relocated LT Patterson's position and established radio communications. However, no radio contact was established with LCDR McDaniel. LT Patterson's parachute was spotted on the ground near an object which was believed to be him. A recovery kit was dropped and landed 100 yards down hill from his position. Because of MIG warnings, the SAR aircraft left the area. At 2100 hours on 21 May 67, SAR aircraft again entered the area and radio contact was again established with LT Patterson, who reported that the enemy had taken the recovery equipment, and he had moved up hill for safety. Again the SAR aircraft had to leave the area, and when they returned the next day they could not establish any contact with either of the downed crewmembers. SAR efforts were terminated without success and LT Patterson and LCDR McDaniel were placed in a POW status. LCDR McDaniel was returned to U.S. control during Operation Homecoming.

U.S. records carry two locations for this loss. The first, 2042E 10523E, is found a September 1967 U.S. Navy report on the incident and describes the landing site as near a "U-shaped" valley. A second location, 2046N 10526E, is found only in derivative documents. This location is not accurately quoted from original wartime records but results from a mixup of digits or a typographical error.

One member of the flight took hand held photographs of this aircraft as it descended in flames and of the two men in their parachutes.

WartimeLivesight : N
 WartimeCrashGrave : N
 DogtagRpts : N
 UncorrelatedRpts : N
 RemainsReportedPrior : N
 SpecialReporting : N
 WartimeMediaRpts : N
 PostwarMediaRpts : N
 SignifUsgInfo : Y

USGovtInfo Narrative : - WARTIME GRAVE REPORT: IIR 6918 5023 75 reported several sightings. Accompanying evaluation suggested LT Patterson as a candidate for one based solely on general date and loss location. Cannot correlate, however, because source reported body being pulled from aircraft wreckage, and LT Patterson was out of his aircraft.

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- PAGES: The repatriated prisoners of war made many statements concerning the loss of LT Patterson. LCDR McDaniel stated that he had no contact with LT Patterson after bailout. He thought he had been captured and later had died or was killed during interrogation. He was told by a Vietnamese interrogator by the name of 'ONI' that in late 1967 LT Patterson had been injured and was well now, but he had no contact with him. Other returnees stated that they heard his name in the POW system. One returnee stated he believed LT Patterson had been captured because the returnee saw his identification card in a newspaper in 1967. One returnee was told by McDaniel that Patterson died before capture. McDaniel indicated Patterson tried to shoot it out. One returnee reported seeing Patterson's name on a blank questionnaire. There was no writing on the form.

- RETURNEE REPORT: McDaniel reported that he saw aircraft hit the ground before he penetrated a tree canopy, and his chute got hung up in a tree. He ended up falling to the ground and landing on a 50-60 degree slope. Could see cultivation down below, including a hamlet with straw roofed huts. Foliage so dense unable to make much progress up mountain. Estimated he was about 2000 feet up side of 3000 foot mountain. Next day reached a little plateau with dense foliage. When captured, took him one hour to one hour and fifteen minutes to reach little hamlet. Reached second hamlet in late afternoon, on foot. Walked until dark to another village.

- POSTWAR SOURCE REPORT: HK87-046

- POSTWAR SOURCE REPORT: 050944Z Jul 89: Source reported seeing F4 shot down near Nui Doi Thoi on 17 May 1967 and taking part in efforts to capture the two aviators who ejected from the aircraft. He later attended a briefing in which he was told that one aviator's body had been discovered hanging in a parachute suspended above the ground between two trees. The militiamen had called for him to surrender but they heard a shot and believed he had committed suicide. Heard the dead aviator had been a lieutenant colonel; never heard what happened to the other pilot. Basically correlates to Case 0691 but contains inaccurate hearsay regarding the details of death.

- PHOTOANALYSIS 10/93: Analysis of the wartime photo depicting LT Patterson's burning aircraft indicates the aircraft is still in the air over the vicinity of an identifiable terrain feature in the vicinity of 203900E 1052313E. Given obliquity of photo, not possible to determine exact position of aircraft.

- PHOTOANALYSIS : New photoanalysis using original slides of five handheld wartime photos

- RUSSIAN SOURCE REPORTING

- 11/91, News article by Yuri Pankov on 3 November 91 in Soviet newspaper Kommersant: claimed a U.S. pilot captured on 19 May 1967 was brought to Alma Ata then moved to Saryshagansk, Kazakhstan where he still lived. Author of the article later told an "American POW/MIA organization" (not identified or elaborated on) that this pilot's name was James Patterson.

- 11/91, hearsay report from BG Aderhold in Bangkok who said he had heard from an unidentified representative in the Soviet Union that LT Patterson, along with 22 other U.S. POWs, was living in the Soviet Union.

- 2/92, News article by Yuri Pankov on 24 February 92 in Soviet newspaper Kommersant: repeated information previously provided, said acquired from Soviet Air Defense Force Major who asked not to be named. Said U.S. pilot named Patterson or Parkinson was taken in via "window" on Soviet/Chinese border. First to Saryshagan then to Priozersk nearby.

- 6/95, Kazakhstan Interview: Brother of LT Patterson sent 62 Kazakstani scientists photos of LT Patterson, requesting any information. Professor Kolomeyets placed LT Patterson photo in two local newspapers asking for information. Said in response he had received anonymous phone call from woman who said this photo was the "American" who had given her a doll in 1968 when she was 13, and she would never forget his face. Said the man had been with her step-brother who worked in Saryshagan-Priozersk area. When she asked her step brother about the man ten years later, he told her the man had been killed in a car crash in Moscow, and if she wanted to know more she should contact the "Moscow division." Professor Kolomeyets also said that one of his colleagues told him that "Americans" had been at Saryshagan. Colleagues also mentioned a secret research organization named Granit that existed there at the time. Kolomeyets said he had been threatened by phone since involving himself in this issue.

9/95- reinterviewed Kolomeyets, who said he met with a Russian colonel he would not identify who told him there were two and maybe three Americans working on anti missile testing in Priozersk Kazakstan in the late 60s early 70s. The colonel said that Granit at Priozersk was a cover for three distinct activities: testing of ground-launched

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anti-missile missile systems, testing of similar air launched missiles, and tracking of missiles. Kolomeyets said he was convinced one of the Americans was LT Patterson, but he gave no reason why. Repeated claims of threatening calls. Asked for help getting relatives to the U.S.

NumberofInvestig : 6.00
 FoundCrashsite : Y
 PotentialLocations : OT
 TypeofRemains : N
 JTFWitness : Y
 JTFRecommendation : I
 SignifInfoJointInvest : Y
 JointInvestigation Narr: - 12/90, It 12: The team investigated case in Kim Boi District.

- District officials gave an oral report of this incident (later provided in typewritten form dated 30 November 1990) which said: two pilots parachuted into the village on 19 May 1967, and one was captured at about noon on 20 May. The other aviator was not located until 23 May, when the militia found him near the head of Cheo Stream on Ma Sang/Ma Pua Hill. When the aviator opened fire, the militia shot him dead. The pilot was buried on 24 May 1967; about five days later a reinspection team returned to the site but found that wild animals had pulled out the body and eaten it. The coffin had been dug up and pieces were scattered around. Mr. Bui Van Bay received a province military commedation medal for capturing the other pilot.

- Team also examined two wartime documents: 1. handwritten account of lessons learned from capturing American pilots in mountains and forests. Relevant text noted that one aviator was shot dead; another section locates this incident at Thuong Tien. 2. Excerpt from longer tabulated list ((portion of which later determined to be Hoa Binh Shootdown Record, which was eventually turned over in its entirety)); entries 30 and 31 referenced this loss. Entry 30 named Col McDaniel and mistakenly described him as shot dead by the people's militia in Thuong Tien on 19 May 67; Entry 31 named a Maj "Crowjtrieu" down on the same day and captured alive.

- Team traveled to Thuong Tien Village and interviewed four witnesses who described the downing of an aircraft, the capture of one pilot and the death of the second pilot. Three of the witnesses reported that two American pilots landed in Thuong Tien Village near Dong Danh Hamlet in May 67. One of the pilots was captured the morning after the incident about one mile up from Dong Danh Hamlet and turned over to the district military commander at Xom Cong Hamlet after being moved through Dong Danh. The second pilot was shot to death by the militia on the afternoon of the fourth day of the incident. Two of the witnesses reported that the pilot was buried in a coffin on the mountain where he was killed. They also reported later that year when they went back to the site, they discovered that the grave had been dug up by wild animals and the remains destroyed. One witness said he reburied the few fragments that were left. Another witness said he was the one who shot the pilot. Team was not able to reach identified burial site.

- 12/91, It 15: Team interviewed additional witness Bui Van Ong identified in Iteration 12. Said he saw the body of the dead pilot on Dong Danh Mountain; militia at the scene said they had shot him after he fired on them. Witness said he collected personal effects and returned to Thuong Tien and wrote a report, all of which went to a representative of the Hoa Binh military command. Did not see burial.

- 5/92, It 17: Joint team excavated grave site witnesses identified in the vicinity of GC WH437841, above Dong Danh (H), Thuong Tien (V). It was located near a dry stream bed that witnesses said was subject to flooding and on a slope they said had been heavily eroded in the interim. One witness said a large clump of bamboo had sild down the hill after a severe landslide. The team located no remains or material evidence at the site. The team interviewed four witnesses who provided information generally consistent with previous testimony. One witness turned over a navy or marine khaki belt which he claimed was removed from the pilot's body. Another witness said that about five days after the burial, a group of district officials came to verify the death by shooting and dug up the remains; both boards which formed the coffin were still in place, and the body was quickly reburied. Nine or ten years later, province officials directed that the grave be checked and the remains recovered, but the whole area had become a rooting area for wild pigs, and in the former grave area there were only a few small bones that were left in place. Team also

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visited site incorrectly carried in one U.S. document that identified the loss site at WH445955 (2046N 10526E); witnesses at this location provided corroborating information about a 1972 correlating to another resolved case. Terrain did not match that described in records relating to Case 0691.

- 10/92, unidentified "Army topographical specialists" asserted that superimposition of terrain in wartime photo of burning aircraft matched terrain on 1:50,000 map in vicinity of WH464935.

- 4/93 special joint investigation: U.S. team returned to excavation site in Thuong Tien Village, found no additional eyewitnesses or records. Identified terrain features similar to those described in wartime records. Could not locate crashsite, which local officials said was not in Kim Boi District.

- 10/93, DIA photo analysis: comparison of wartime hand-held photo with 1972 overhead of the area revealed that burning aircraft was traveling in east/northeast direction; identifiable terrain point below the aircraft was located at 203900N 1052313E but it was not possible to make an exact position call for the aircraft, which was still airborne.

- 3/94, Navy Ejection Analysis. Naval Air Warfare Center based conducted an analysis unfortunately based on incorrect data provided by Navy Casualty. Assumed burning aircraft shown in photo was on the ground at 203900N 1052313E, instead of in the air generally above an identifiable terrain feature at that location. Based on these incorrect assumptions, Navy predicted an area in which parachute probably landed that was approximately 5-7 kilometers west of the area indicated by Thuong Tien Village witnesses.

- 5/94, It 29: Team went Thuong Tien Village to attempt to locate the crash site, even though both crewmembers were out of the aircraft. Vietnamese government officials were unable to locate anyone with knowledge of a crash site. Team went to 203900N 1052300E, site of identifiable terrain feature noted below burning aircraft in wartime photo and found no evidence of a crash site.

- 11/94, It 32: Team investigated various possible crashsites in villages neighboring Thuong Tien. Determined there was no crashsite at WH464935. Canvassed local inhabitants of Xom Chau, Yen Thuong Village, Ky Son District, identified as the crashsite location in a unilateral report provided in January 1990. Villagers said no aircraft crashed in the area during the war, and Ky Son officials could not provide any assistance. At Lang Cham, Yen Lap Village, Ky Son District, found one witness, Bui Van Bon, who said he saw a burning aircraft and two parachutes sometime during the war. According to hearsay, one pilot had reportedly been captured and the other's fate was uncertain. Witness Bon said he had been to the crashsite several times and showed team wreckage alleged to come from the site. This wreckage was later determined to be generic to Navy and Air Force aircraft. Bon led the team to a crash site at 48Q WH4022584388. Team recovered aircraft wreckage that later analysis could not correlate to any specific aircraft or incident. Second witness from Yen Lap said he had found wreckage 3-4 kilometers northeast of the crater and gave team wreckage said to come from this second site. Later analysis indicated this wreckage was consistent with a Navy or Marine aircraft using the Martin Baker ejection system in which ejection sequence had been initiated and was consistent with Navy/Marine F4, F8 or A6 aircraft. Due to time constraints, team could not visit second site.

UnitInfo : Y
 CtryofInfo : VN
 ValueofInfo : S
 CtryProvidedFilm : NA
 CtryProvidedRemains : NA
 CtryProvidedLibrary : VN
 CtryProvidedRecords : VN

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SignifInfoUniAction : Y

UnifInfoNarr :

- UNILATERAL REPORT: At November 1985 Technical Talks, Vietnam informed the U.S. that LT Patterson was one of seven Americans whose remains had been found by locals during the war, but the remains were no longer recoverable. The bodies were originally buried by local people who recorded basic identity data from personal effects. These graves were later destroyed by U.S. bomb attacks.

- PERSONAL MEDIA: 4 December 1985 remains repatriation, Vietnam provided LT Patterson's military identification card and his Geneva Convention Card.

- UNILATERAL REPORT: October 1987 Technical Talks, VNOSMP reported (and provided written report) that the aircraft had been hit by a missile over Dong Dang Mountain, Thuong Tien Village, and two pilots had ejected. LCDR McDaniel was captured the next day. On the second (third, according to the written report) day, the other pilot, LT Patterson, was shot while resisting capture and buried on the spot. The local militia removed his military identification card and Geneva Convention Card prior to burial, and these were forwarded to higher authorities and eventually turned over to the U.S. A few days after the incident, local people noticed the grave had been disturbed by a wild boar, and the remains had been destroyed. The report heard by LCDR McDaniel that LT Patterson's leg wound had healed was completely false.

- UNILATERAL REPORT: At the 17-19 Jan 90 technical meeting, the Vietnamese provided additional information concerning case 0691. One document conveyed the findings of the VNOSMP. A second document is a photocopy of a local report of the incident, dated 13 Nov 72. This report stated that the aircraft crashed at Xom Chau Village, Yen Thuong Village. LT Patterson died at 1600 hours on 22 May 1967 after being struck by a militia bullet that passed through the right chest and severed the bronchia. Report said he was buried with a piece of planking and the grave marked with a large stone. When the village went to reverify the grave, the body had been dug up by wild animals and eaten. The remaining bones were buried beside a stream and "may have been carried off by the water." This report was signed by village and district officials. It was confirmed as genuine by a representative of Group 875, General Political Directorate and by the District Military Command. The Vietnamese also provided a second Geneva Convention Card for LT Patterson which was different from that provided in December 1985 in that the typewritten information was differently spaced. ((Note: Geneva Convention Cards were not controlled items, and it is entirely possible that LT Patterson might have had two.))

- UNILATERAL REPORT: November 1991, Vietnam provided a report of investigation into a reported loss in Mong Hoa Village, Ky Son District, where a refugee had reported on an American who died from a leg wound and was buried. Vietnamese said this actually occurred in Phuc Tien Village, and analysis indicated it involved Case 0547 who has been accounted for. Report said team then went to Kim Boi District and talked to Bui Van Loi, who reiterated information previously provided on the pilot who was buried on Dong Danh Mountain. Team also talked to another witness from Iteration 12 and located a helicopter landing site near the reported gravesite. Local people said grave was near a stream on a high slope in an area subject to torrential rains, and it was unlikely anything remained.

- RECORDS: On 17 Nov 92, the SRV provided a documented titled, 'List of American Pilots Taken by the People and Army of Hoa Binh During the Eight Year War (3 May 1965 to 30 Dec 72).' Line entries #30 and #31 correlate with REFNO 0691-1-01 and 0691-2-02 based on name, serial number, date and place (Thuong Tien Village) of loss. Previously shown to joint team in Iteration 12.

On 1 Sep 93, the Vietnamese turned over a document titled 'List of Deceased U.S. Soldiers that Were Buried (Grave Site Undetermined).' Each case on the list was followed by the comment 'Burial site cannot be located; concluded that grave site is indeterminable.' Entry number 22 on the Vietnamese document correlated with REFNO 0691. Most of the REFNOs listed on this document appeared on a U.S. list of 84 cases for which U.S. analysts believe the Vietnamese should have additional information.

On 14 Dec 1993, the SRV provided several documents related to 84 cases assigned to the JTF-FA special remains team (SRT). One document titled, 'List of U.S. Servicemen Who Died During the War in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (Remains not Recovered)', provides information correlating to REFNO 0691-1-01, an unresolved case. Correlation is based on name, date of birth, rank, aircraft type, incident date and location of loss.

SeaCtryKnowLoss : Y

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WhichCtryKnew : VN

MoreInfo : N

KnowledgeNarr : The Vietnamese were knowledgeable at time of incident. ID media returned by the Vietnamese shows at one time they knew where the remains were located and had control of them. The question today is where those remains were located. Vietnamese government officials likely do not know where the remains are. Villagers in the area JTF has yet to canvass may be able to assist in locating the burial site.

FurtherPursuitJust : Y

PursueWho : NA

JointPursuit : NA

HowToJointPursue : NA

CtryForUnilatPursuit : NA

PursueUnilat : NA

TypeOfLeads : NA

KindOfUSPursuit : OT

FurtherPursuitNarr : THE FOLLOWING TEXT IS OBSOLETE:

JTF needs to canvass the villagers in Lang Cham Hamlet, Yen Lap village to see if any other witnesses may have information on this case. The discovery of the possible crash site and ejection related equipment may indicate additional information in this village. Although documents list the grave area being east of the possible crash site, further investigation will confirm if this is the case. The ejection analysis concluded the crash site is to the west vice east.

The witnesses may be able to assist if any of them can remember the point where the Fulton extraction equipment was recovered. This would be the same hill where Patterson was located and buried. The disposition of the equipment is not required, but serves as a locational reference point.

WhyDeferPursuit : NA

HowWhereOffScope : NA

FurtherPursuitDefNarr : NA

WhyNoFurther : NA

PrevAttemptRecov : NA

NoFurtherNarr :

INITIALCOORD : SNR

RECORD1 : A-USA RESEARCH

RECORD2 :

RECORD3 :