

Liebe Familie Davit!

Am 14. Juni 2001, kam Herr Schührer mit den vier Kindern von Herrn Len Titmus nach Maitis und Wäschenbeuren um den Ort des Unfalls selbst zu sehen und über den schrecklichen Hergang mehr zu erfahren. Am 16. März 1945 hat uns ein ohrenbetäubender, explosionsartiger Krach erschreckt und wir wußten gleich, jetzt ist was schreckliches passiert.

Das Flugzeug wurde getroffen und fing sofort Feuer und stürzte ab. Ihr lieber Angehöriger fiel als völlig verkohlte Leiche und total zusammengekrümmt auf dem Grundstück meiner Eltern (Schäfhalde) nieder. Unter seiner Erkennungsmarke war noch ein kleines Stück heile Haut erhalten. Ich schaute mir dieses Erlebnis nur an, mit dem - Gefühl - es sind ja unserer Feinde. Als ich den Toten sah, kam mir plötzlich der Gedanke, er ist doch auch ein Mensch um den irgendwo eine Familie trauert. Der entsetzliche Anblick von Eurem lieben Angehörigen, hat mich Wochen oder Monate verfolgt. Am schlimmsten war es, wenn ich schlafen wollte, da stand immer das Bild vor mir.

Habe erst jetzt durch diesen Besuch erfahren, dass jener Fliegersoldat aus Neuseeland stammte.

Herr Wilhelm Weiler, welcher selbst behindert war, aber ein herzenguter Mensch war, brachte Ihren Lieben in einer Decke eingewickelt mit seinem kleinen Wagen und seinem Islandpferd zu unserem kleinen Dorffriedhof, wo er bis 1948 seine Ruhestätte hatte.

Er lag am Ende vom Friedhof, die dortige Abgrenzung von seinem Grab verlief somit mit einer Hecke. Öfters legte jemand ein frisches Blümlein auf sein Grab, denn auch in Maitis gab es Mütter und Frauen die durch diesen schrecklichen Krieg ihr Liebstes verloren haben und somit dieses Grab mal besuchten.

Mit Herrn Schührer und den vier Kindern von Herrn Titmus gingen wir an das einstige Grab Ihres Lieben.

Danach machten wir noch am Grab von Herrn Wilhelm Weiler halt, welcher mit 36 Jahren 1958 verstarb.

Die Nachkommen von Herrn Titmus waren mir sehr sympatisch und wir wären eher Freunde statt Feinde geworden.

Ein Geheimnis ist das Leben  
und ein ewiges Rätsel der Tod!

Es Grüßt Euch ganz herzlich  
unbekannter Weise



Ruth Gürtler

**Translation of Mrs. Ruth Gürtler's Testimony by Mr. Peter Schührer,  
15<sup>th</sup> June 2001**

Beloved Family Davis!

The 14<sup>th</sup> June 2001 Mr Schuhrer came with four of the children of Mr Len Titmus to Maitis and Waschenbeuren to see the place of the accident for themselves and get to know more about the terrible event. On March 16<sup>th</sup> 1945 we were frightened by a noise which was like a deafening explosion and we knew immediately something terrible had happened.

The aircraft was hit and was immediately on fire and fell down. Your beloved relative fell as a burnt human being and was hunched on the meadow of my parents called Scheffhalde (sheep slope). Under his identification tag there was a little bit of his skin preserved. I looked at him with a feeling it is only an enemy when I was going to the place but when I saw the dead man I thought it is a human being which has a family which is mourning. It was such a dreadful vision and for weeks and months I was haunted by it. The most terrible was when I tried to sleep I had the picture in my head. Now I got to know with your visit that this airman derived from New Zealand.

Mr Wilhelm Weiler who was disfigured but a kind hearted man brought your beloved relative rolled in a blanket in a small cart and his horse to the small cemetery of our village where he found until 1948 his last place of rest. He lie at the end of the cemetery near the hedge. Often someone brought fresh flowers to his grave because in Maitis there were mothers and women who lost due to this terrible war their loved ones and so visited this grave. With Mr Schuhrer and the four children of Mr Titmus we went to the former grave of your beloved relative then we stopped at the grave of Wilhelm Weiler who died in the age of 36 in 1958.

The descendants of Mr Titmus were very sympathetic and we would have been friends instead of enemies.

A secret is life and an eternal mystery in death!

Very heartily greetings for me unknown family

(signed)

Ruth Gurtler

Ruth Gurtler  
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## Supplementary Notes by Mrs. Christine Lemm, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2001

A couple of weeks ago Peter put an advert in the local newspaper for information and a friend of Mrs. Ruth Gürtler telephoned him and told him about her. Peter took us to see her last Thursday and she took us to the graveyard in Maitis and showed us where Mervyn was first buried and then she took us to the beautiful hill where his body was found.

She was obviously very affected by this event and could recall clearly what had happened, she was 16 years old at the time. I asked her if she would write down all the details and let Peter have it to send to me but she came to his house on Saturday afternoon with it all done and I was able to again ask her more questions.

Wilhelm Weiler, the man who took Mervyn to the cemetery, was congenitally deformed (? spina bifida). According to Ruth if everyone was half as kind as he was the world would be a better place.

Ruth was present at Mervyn's funeral and took flowers to him regularly when she laid flowers on her parent's graves.

She describes him as being in a crouched position, which I would call the foetal position but Keith would call it the emergency position. He was found sitting in a hole, which the force of his body landing had made. His whole body was burnt apart from a small area under his dog tags. As someone kept the CWGC identified him from his shirt collar I assume his ID tags.

There was no parachute to be seen.

Otto has found two men who were small boys at the time and visited the area where Mervyn was found, they give a similar story to Ruth and also say that there was no parachute to be seen.

It seems logical to surmise that Mervyn's body fell out of the aircraft when it split in two. He certainly died in a beautiful place and was buried in a lovely peaceful spot in the corner of a small graveyard under a tree.

Although this does not make pleasant reading I think it will help his family to realise that he stood no chance of survival and almost certainly died inside the aircraft. After his death he was treated with respect and dignity. Ruth has found a degree of comfort from our visit as she can now put a name to the young man she found.