

## *James Patrick Kenny Memories*

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### **James Patrick Kenny 0-691368**

James Patrick "Jim" Kenny was born June 23, 1917 in New York to Patrick and Mary Kenny, one of six children. Jim attended Fordham College in New York and was a police patrolman when he signed up with the Army Air Force.

After pilot classes and logging many hours in the air, he was commissioned a 2Lt and Pilot. In June, 1944, Lt. Kenny transferred into the 668 Bomber Squadron.

He flew over 20 dangerous and harrowing missions before being paired with gunner SSgt Jack Sittarich. He and gunner Sittarich proved to be a good team and would go on to crew together for over 30 missions in various A-20s and A-26s. The two faced many life threatening situations together and were classified among America's greatest contributors to the war effort.

Later known as "Black Sunday", March 18, 1945 would be the last mission day for both men. Classified Mission number 239 was the early morning bombing run near Worms, Germany and was one of the worst missions of the war. On that extremely dense, cloudy 10/10 day, moderate flak met the 416th on the mission to knock out marshalling yards, roads and rail tracks. The anti aircraft gunners from the ground found the formation through the cloud break and let loose with everything they had. Four planes were lost near the town of Bingen. Two went down near the target. Twenty three other planes suffered flak damage.

The plane serial number 41-39361 piloted by Lt. James P. Kenny with gunner SSgt John J. Sittarich received a direct hit in the left engine. According to Sgt Sittarich, "Flak burst under the bomb bay of our plane and the plane pitched up in the air. SSgt. Sittarich could smell the flak, which meant the hits were too close. Lt. Kenny settled the plane back down and we got hit again."

"The plane went straight up in the air and rolled over." SSgt. Sittarich was semi-conscious at the time and doesn't remember the plane rolling over. The plane had taken a direct hit to the right engine, was doomed and already going down. "Planes in trouble went down with engines smoking," Ralph Conte wrote in his book, *Attack Bombers We Need You!*

On fire, 41-39361 pulled away from the formation. No chutes were seen. The plane was a total loss. Lt. James P. Kenny, at age 27 was KIA. Gunner SSgt. John J. Sittarich bailed out through the fire and was taken POW.

Lt. Kenny was laid to rest at American War Cemetery Lorraine

AFPPA-8

AFPPA/EEH/sla/77117  
Rm. 4324, 4/27/45AAF 201 - (13152) Kenny, James P.  
0691368

3 May 1945

Mrs. Mary E. Kenny  
462 Beh 133rd Street  
New York, New York

Dear Mrs. Kenny:

I am writing you with reference to your son, First Lieutenant James P. Kenny, who was reported by The Adjutant General as missing in action over Germany since 18 March 1945.

Additional information has been received indicating that Lieutenant Kenny was the pilot on an A-26 (Invader) bomber which participated in a combat mission to Worms, Germany, on 18 March 1945. The report reveals that during this mission about 10:05 a.m., over the target, our planes were subjected to enemy antiaircraft fire and your son's bomber sustained damage. The crew members of accompanying planes were unable to obtain any other details relative to the whereabouts of Lieutenant Kenny, and it is regretted that the foregoing constitutes all the information presently available in this headquarters.

The only other person in the plane with your son was the gunner, Staff Sergeant John J. Sittarich, whose emergency addressee is his mother, Mrs. John J. Sittarich, Buckenridge, Minnesota. This is given in the belief that you may wish to correspond with her.

Please be assured that a continuing search by land, sea, and air is being made to discover the whereabouts of our missing personnel. As our armies advance over enemy occupied territory, special troops are assigned to this task, and agencies of our government and allies frequently send in details which aid us in bringing additional information to you.

Very sincerely,

N. W. REED  
Major, Air Corps  
Assistant Chief, Notification Branch  
Personal Affairs Division  
Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel