

42-52684, nose number 54, with Pilot Lawrence Z Rose at the controls was shot down on June 11, 1944. Louis Falvo, the Navigator, reports the aircraft did not have a name. The crew was going to name it "The Rose" for the pilot's wife, Betty. Lawrence Z "Larry" and Betty Rose were married about a year before the crew were shot down, and had a son. Falvo didn't know his given name. Betty remarried sometime after Larry was shot down and moved to Eyria, OH, her new married name is unknown.

William Hardin, the copilot reports that they had to change airplanes because the ship originally assigned to them had an oxygen leak which would have been their own plane. By the time they became airborne in another ship, they were late catching up with the formation and instead of flying lead which would be Able 11, they were assigned to deputy lead which would be Able 12 in the formation. The lead ship was shot down and Rose's crew moved up to take the lead, and they in turn were shot down by fighter aircraft.

If indeed the lead ship was shot down by flak gunners, it was SOP (Standard Operation Procedure). Flak gunners would aim for the lead aircraft in hopes of dispersing the formation. It is not known what happened to the lead ship.

The normal crew complement of a combat mission totaled ten, four officers, and six enlisted men. The officers consisted of Pilot, Copilot, Navigator, and Bombardier. The enlisted men were Engineer-Gunner, Radio Operator-Gunner, Nose turret Gunner, Upper turret gunner, Lower Ball Turret Gunner, and tail gunner. This is assuming that the Engineer and Radio Operator were assigned to the two waist guns. In the case of some lead crews an extra navigator or radar operator would be on board. Usually several aircraft in the formation would have a photographer on board to take bomb strike photos. In addition special radio operators might be on board also to jam flak gun transmissions, and to monitor German fighter control instructions so that the formation could alter course to avoid interception by Luftwaffe fighters.

The crew in aircraft S/N 42-52684 flying Able 12 and 11, June 11, 1944 consisted of:

Pilot	Lawrence Z Rose	KIA, S/N 0804406*
Copilot	William Hardin	POW
Navigator	Louis Falvo	POW, S/N 0687824
Bombardier	David Coleck	KIA, S/N T22088
Engineer U/G	Ben G Olds	KIA, S/N 38288918
Radio Operator	James W Hartgrove	KIA, S/N 34432711*
Nose Gunner	William L Humphrey	KIA, S/N 38255625
Ball Gunner	Victor B Laucella	KIA, S/N 31143530
Tail Gunner	Raymond Kennedy	KIA, S/N 36353036

* Rose was alive during bail out, but died of his wounds in a Romanian hospital. * Hartgrove fell into the deep water of the Danube and was carried away from shore by a strong undertow and drowned. The Target that day was Giugiu located about 30

kilometers south of Ploesti. A pipeline ran from Ploesti to Giugiu where barges were loaded to transport fuel into Germany. These barges were attacked at night by RAF Wellingtons operating out of Torretta. Later this job was taken over by RAF 205 squadrons flying out of southern Italy. The Wellingtons moved to another base prior to the 461st and 484th Bomb Groups taking over Torretta Field. Hardin did say that they dropped on Ploesti instead of Giugiu.

Hardin goes on to say that he did not have his leg straps fastened, when he jumped, he had unfastened the straps so as to aid either the radio operator or the engineer, when the cockpit caught on fire, and his only option was to jump as is. He floated down hanging on the risers with his bare hands almost falling out of the chute several times and did fall out of his chute when he hit the Danube River.

Free of his harness and parachute he managed to swim to the shore. Picked up by the Rumanians and the Germans,

he was asked to identify any crewmen from a stack of dead bodies nearby. Prodded by the Germans to quickly identify anyone from the pile, he could not. He was still suffering the after effects of the jump and was not feeling well at that time. Hardin confirms Falvo's story that Larry Rose, (Falvo says that is what the crew called him), was wounded in the leg before jumping out of the aircraft, and survived long enough to be taken to a hospital where he either died of his wounds or of dysentery.

Four men parachuted out of the burning aircraft, Pilot Larry Rose, copilot William Hardin, Navigator Louis Falvo, and the Radio Operator James W Hartgrove. Hartgrove fell into the Danube

