

Combat report by 1/Lt. William J. Ingram (1944)

Littlefield, Robert M., Double Nickel, Double Trouble, S. 133/134

"I was flying Acorn White 3 and **Lt. Eskridge** was flying my wing as Acorn White 4. About 10.30 hours on 26 August 1944, we were approaching Ludwigshafen, Germany, on our planned course at 21,000 feet. We were already in the target area when Lt. Hailey, Acorn Yellow leader, called on the R/T saying that Acorn White 4, Lt. Eskridge, was smoking badly. I glance back, and, seeing that he was in trouble, asked Lt. Eskridge whether he'd like to go home. Without replying he broke off and proceeded to the NW. He jettisoned his belly tanks, and called to me to give him a safe course home. I gave him a steer of 290 degrees and flew with him on that course for 10 to 15 minutes. I observed Lt. Eskridge's RPMs to be rapidly falling off, causing him to lose altitude. At one time he called up saying his engine was getting too hot and he figured that he'd have to leave the ship. I encouraged him to hang on as long as possible. However, when he had dropped to 5,500 feet, he rolled his ship over and dropped out. His chute opened immediately and the ship plunged directly into a railway track. Lt. Eskridge landed in a small village.

I continued on home and upon arriving judged the location of Lt. Eskridge's landing to be 4945 degrees N - 0725 degrees E. I attribute the loss of the aircraft and pilot to material failure, since there was no enemy activity up to that point."

[Lt. Eskridge crashed at Sötern, St. Wendel County, Germany]