

**National Archives & Records Administration**  
**War Department Files**  
**2 LT Jack L. Williamson**  
**Class 67-43**

**ID: O1182744**

**Branch of Service: U.S. Army**  
**Hometown: Outagamie County, WI**  
**Status: KIA September 24, 1944**



**Killed in action serving as an aerial observer with the 907th Glider Field Artillery Battalion in a plane piloted by 1LT John M. Sherry (FAOCS Class 59-43)**



Remains of Lt. Sherry's liaison plane which was brought down by enemy small arms.

## **Eyewitness report of the crash:**

Anyway about that airplane you said was shot down that Piper Cub. I saw the thing flying over and he seemed awful low to the trees. There are a lot of trees there; these weren't open meadows right around us at this place; kind of a wood sparse like thing. And this highway that we speak of was built up with real deep ditches on each side, maybe 10 or 12-15 feet deep on each side. As you probably know Southern Holland is very low and marshy and of course, you got to have the mud... mud goes with war!

Anyway, I saw this plane dip down into these trees, but some ways off and some smoke going up. So, I got hold of Lt Blake, because he was someone you could talk to and I pointed it out to him and told him what I'd seen.

So we got together a little group there, I think it was a guy named Toucksberry and no doubt Henry Keith. Anyway 4 or 5 of us with Lt. Blake in the lead. We go down in the ditches and what not, make it over to these woods, and finally from the smoke and what not we carefully make our way up to this plane that had crashed. It was probably one of the most gruesome sites that I saw in the whole war, and I saw quit a few. These guys were in a plane that had come down head first through these trees. They were still buckled in their seats, the flames were actually melting... you could see the skin rolling and boiling into a liquid and rolling down their arms. It was really horrible thing but there was nothing we could do for either one as they were already gone. That was one episode that day.

## **From Unknown Source:**

Just one of the victims of the war in Europe was Jack L Williamson serial number O-1182744 who came from Appleton Wisconsin. Jack was the oldest of three sons, enlisted in the Army on 26<sup>th</sup>, August 1942, and became a second lieutenant in the 907<sup>th</sup> Glider Field Artillery Battalion (907th GFA) of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division and enlisted in the Army on 26<sup>th</sup>, August 1942.

Lt Williamson served as an air observer in the 907th GFA which meant that he while flying in an airplane directed their own artillery batteries in support of the infantry units. During the first days of Market Garden their artillery was still in position in the drop/landing zone.

These small airplanes called Piper Cub L-4's came in by several trucks and were easily to handle. The airplane in which Jack flew was piloted by first lieutenant John M Sherry of the 101<sup>st</sup> Divisional Headquarters.

While flying above Hell's Highway on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September they came under heavy German small arms fire and went down near the village of Eerde. Both members the pilot and observer were killed during the crash.

*Buried in Highland Memorial Park Cemetery, Appleton, Wisconsin*