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**Maggie's Drawers -
The short life of
Staff Sergeant Eugene Kalinowsky**

(October 12, 1920 - October 15, 1944)



Content

To the escort	3
1. Eugene Kalinowsky's childhood and youth	5
2. The USA and Eugene Kalinowsky in World War II	6
3. The air war of the USA	8
4. Eugene Kalinowsky's last days	9
5. Death in Laubenheim/near	12
6. Burial and exhumation	15
7. Return to home	17
8. The memorial stone for Eugene Kalinowsky	21

To the escort

This short biography of Eugene Kalinowsky, a young US-American aviator shot down and murdered in World War II, has a history and a happy opportunity.

The prehistory began with research on the "Assassination in Laubenheim". A note from the recently deceased former vice president of the district court of Bad Kreuznach Karl Ludwig Knodel drew my attention to werewolf activities at the end of World War II in the Bad Kreuznach area. In the process I came across a criminal case against the Langenlonsheim vintner Karl Tesch. Tesch was an SS-Obersturmführer during the Nazi era and after the war he was accused of having killed a young US-American pilot shot down over Heddesheim in Laubenheim/Nahe. Thus the story about the werewolf had received a different focus. Although Tesch was indeed a werewolf leader in the lower Naheland, the death of the young American and the clarification and punishment of this crime in the post-war period was now in the center of attention.

While the events could be easily reconstructed on the basis of the criminal trial, the identity of the killed person remained unknown by name. However, since a murder case can only be told inadequately without closer knowledge of the victim, I tried to further clarify the matter. For research in America, I asked for help from Ms. Anne Kazel-Wilcox, an American author and journalist whom I had met in another military context. She immediately agreed and was able to give me further information very soon.

For example, I learned about the deployment and shooting down of the Liberator bomber "Maggie's Drawers" on October 15, 1944. We were even able to identify two possible victims: Eugene Kalinowsky and another crew member named Richard J. Ellwart. Both were interesting for the work, since two airmen had died after being shot down: one whose parachute had obviously not opened and who was immediately dead on impact in Heddesheim, and another who was killed in Laubenheim after his capture - the victim in the criminal trial.

Thanks to further research by Ms. Kazel-Wilcox, we were able to identify the shot man as Eugene Kalinowsky. But not only that. She also succeeded in locating relatives of him and establishing contact with them.

She then arranged this for me, so that I could get in touch with Eugene Kalinowsky's niece, Mrs. Carole Brooks. This was a stroke of luck; I received a lot of information about Eugene Kalinowsky and his family as well as family photos.

With this knowledge, study of the files, further research at the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen, information from contemporary witnesses Georg Riethmüller and Günter Best, and a site visit with Mr. and Mrs. Kuhn, I was able to write an essay about it in 2016: "Der Meuchelmord in Laubenheim - Ein Stück Kreuznacher Justizgeschichte" (The Assassination in Laubenheim - A Piece of Kreuznach Justice History), published in the Jahrbuch für westdeutsche Landesgeschichte, 42nd ed. (2016), pp. 379-464.

I had previously given a lecture on the topic at the Stiftung Haus der Stadtgeschichte in Bad Kreuznach. Then a gentleman contacted me and asked for a copy of my essay. At the time I was happy to do so without knowing what particular interest he had in this story.

At the beginning of April this year I learned through a newspaper article that a former citizen of Laubenheim had a memorial stone for Eugene Kalinowsky made of his own accord and wanted to have it erected. Due to the Corona crisis this - so it was said - was not possible. Now the stone is ready and should soon be set up and inaugurated at the scene of the crime in Laubenheim.

With this information I got to know the sponsor of the stone, Dr. Karl-Heinz Bock in Geisenheim. He was also the enquirer to whom I had sent my essay some years ago. We quickly agreed to take the delay caused by the Corona crisis as an opportunity to make further preparations for the inauguration.

I contacted Mrs. Brooks again and informed her about the new project. From her I received some more family photos. She in turn informed the local press in the USA.

As agreed upon with Dr. Bock, I prepared a short biography of Eugene Kalinowsky. It is now finished. I am pleased to be able to present it here in Laubenheim for the inauguration of the monument to Eugene Kalinowsky.

My thanks go to all those who have helped to keep the memory of Eugene Kalinowsky alive.

Laubenheim/Nahe, October 16, 2020

1. Eugene Kalinowsky's childhood and youth

Eugene Kalinowsky was born on October 12, 1920 in Pittsfield, a small town by U.S. standards in the district of Berkshire County in the western part of the state of Massachusetts, USA. He was the second oldest child of his parents Vasily and Anna Kalinowsky. Both were immigrants. His father came from Belarus, from Koybrn. In 1912 he emigrated to the USA. There he met his wife Anna. She came from Austria and had immigrated from there to the USA. Both probably got married during the First World War. The Kalinowskys ran a small farm in Pittsfield, kept cattle and grew vegetables. The marriage produced a total of nine children. Two girls died as infants and seven grew up. Eugene, they called him Gene, had an older sister, Viola, and after him as the second oldest, his younger siblings Alex, Nina, Serge, John and Michael were born.



Relatives of Eugene Kalinowsky (from left to right: brothers John and Michael, father Vasily and brother Serge).

It were certainly "small circumstances" in which Eugene grew up.

He attended school in Pittsfield, most recently high school. Afterwards he was employed by a freight forwarding company in the neighboring town of Dalton.

2. The USA and Eugene Kalinowsky in World War II

This quite contemplative world in New England in the east of the USA came to an abrupt end in the Second World War. Although the war raged far away - since September 1, 1939, when Hitler Germany invaded Poland and in the Pacific there with the War on the Pacific - it had repercussions for the United States. Starting in the summer of 1940, the United States gradually changed its policy of neutrality. The occasion was the war situation in Western and Northern Europe created by Hitler's Germany, the occupation of the neutral states there, the collapse of France, Italy's entry into the war, the threatened invasion of England and the conclusion of the three-power pact of Germany, Italy and Japan against the United States. This made the U.S. aware of the simultaneous threat of totalitarian powers from both the Atlantic and the Pacific.

In response, US President Theodore Roosevelt took a series of measures to strengthen US defense. One of these was the introduction of universal conscription. This was done by the Selective Training and Service Act of September 16, 1940, under which all male U.S. Americans and foreigners between the ages of 18 and 25 who were permanent residents of the United States had to enlist no later than 30 days after their 18th birthday. Eugene Kalinowsky was also affected by this registration, since he was 19 years old when the law came into power. However, it took more than a year before the USA entered the war that was to become a world war. The occasion was the attack by Japanese forces on December 7, 1941, on the U.S. Pacific fleet anchored off Hawaii, most of which was then no longer operational. The following day, the USA declared war on Japan. Three days later, Hitler Germany, allied with Japan, did the same to the United States.

Soon, in November 1942, Eugene Kalinowsky became a soldier in the U.S. Air Force (USAAF).



Eugene Kalinowsky as a young aviator.



Eugene Kalinowsky in front of the map of Italy.

Kalinowsky was assigned to the 566th Strategic Missile Squadron. After training in the United States, the squadron was transferred to England and was part of the 389th Strategic Missile Wing (known as the "Scorpions of the Skies") in air warfare in Europe and North Africa. Initially the squadron was deployed in the Mediterranean region and also led attacks against Italy, which at that time was allied with Hitler's Germany as an Axis power ("Axis Berlin-Rome-Tokyo").

His nieces tell that Gene was a "jester". He liked to make jokes and jokes and had a lot of fun entertaining his surroundings with them. One of his nieces still remembers that after her birth he visited her family in 1943 and hung the baby's shoes around her neck - they were supposed to bring him luck in the war.

3. The air war of the USA

Later, the 566th Strategic Missile Squadron participated in the strategic bombing campaign against Germany as a squadron of the 389th Strategic Missile Wing. Together with the British Royal Air Force (RAF), the USAAF was supposed to conduct the air war to force Hitler to surrender.



Eugene Kalinowsky (right) with comrade.

By the beginning of the summer of 1944, the American Air Force had almost completely eliminated the German Luftwaffe and gained absolute air sovereignty over the German Reich and all of Western and Central Europe.

During this time or a little later, Eugene Kalinowsky was part of the crew of the Liberator bomber called "Maggie's Drawers" as a tail gunner.

Because of the air sovereignty of the Americans, the danger of being shot down over Germany was not particularly great for the individual airman. If it happened nevertheless, international law of war did offer some protection. Thus the Geneva Convention on the Treatment of Prisoners of War of July 27, 1929, stipulated in Article 3, paragraph 1, first sentence, that prisoners of war were entitled to respect for their person and their honor. Already under the Hague Land Warfare Convention of 1907, the treacherous killing or wounding of members of the enemy people or army, and the killing or wounding of an enemy who had surrendered at mercy or disgrace, whether arms were stretched or defenseless, was prohibited (Article 23). The German Reich had ratified both international treaties.

However, as early as May 1944, Reich Minister of Propaganda Goebbels had stirred up the German population against the "enemy air terror" and against the "terror planes" and "child murderers" and had declared "understanding" when the parents, seized by "raging anger," practiced vigilante justice on "enemy pilots. Thus the international law of war was effectively suspended in relation to shot down airplanes and the "citizens of rage" were given a carte blanche for the murder of "terror pilots".

4. Eugene Kalinowsky's Last Days

We do not know with what feelings and thoughts Eugene Kalinowsky flew his combat missions in early fall 1944, whether he had not lost his good mood and jokes even at the end of his second year of the war. At least he was able to celebrate his 24th birthday on October 12, 1944, not at home, but with his comrades from the occupation. In addition, his home leave was imminent. Therefore, no further deployment was planned for him. At short notice, however, he was planned for before his vacation. It was then his 50th - and then also his last - mission.

On October 15, 1944, the Liberator bomber "Maggie's Drawers" took off. On board were Staff Sergeant Eugene Kalinowsky, Tail Gunner - Lieutenant Robert C. Card, Navigator - Technical Sergeant William R. Gardiner, the Radio Operator - Lieutenant John R. Hanzlick, the Pilot - Flight Officer Charles A. Lindberg, the Co-Pilot ("Co-Pilot") - Corporal ("Staff Sergeant") Prince E. Strickland, the Bombardier, enlisted(?), the nose gunner - NCO Harry Zettick, the left waist gunner - Staff Sergeant Kurt Hirschinger, the right waist gunner - First Lieutenant John F. Hodges Jr, Bombardier ("Bombardier") and the gunner on the aircraft seat ("Top Turret Gunner") Technical Sergeant Richard J. Ellwart.



The crew of "Maggie's Drawers", Eugene Kalinowsky left in the squat.

Their mission was to attack a fuel depot in Reisholz near Düsseldorf. At the target "Maggie's Drawer" was hit by the German flak, so that one engine stopped and she had to leave the formation. Then her pilot tried to fly home along the prescribed route. Near Bingen, however, the plane came back into flak fire and got a direct hit in the bomb bay. This caused a fuel tank to catch fire. A little later, the heavy railroad flak brigade lying in the train station in Langenlonsheim shot down the plane over Heddesheim an der Nahe (today part of the local community of Guldental). Even before the bomber exploded, the entire crew bailed out.

One of the soldiers, Sergeant Richard J. Ellwart, probably did not open his parachute. On impact on the Heddesheim ground Ellwart was immediately dead. Later he was found to have fractured his skull and fibula.

The other nine pilots were able to save themselves with their parachutes. Most of them went down on the right bank of the Nahe River on Rhine-Hessian territory. Eugene Kalinowsky hovered towards the Laubenheim on the left bank of the Nahe. He landed east of the village in the Schützenkopf district, in the vineyards above the threshing floor.



Laubenheim/Nahe with the Schützenkopf district in the foreground, 2016.

5. Death in Laubenheim/Nahe

Eugene Kalinowsky had been observed from Laubenheim for a long time. Many inhabitants of the village rushed to the landing site. Two soldiers in the uniform of the light flak unit stationed in Laubenheim were among the first to arrive. They arrested Kalinowsky. He was healthy and uninjured, only his head was slightly burned. One of the two soldiers had previously reported to his unit commander in the village about the decline of an enemy plane. The other soldier was therefore faster at the landing site and later described the events as follows:

The plane had been at an altitude of about 2,500 meters. I immediately chose a descending parachute and, when it started to land, I was still about 10 meters away from the American soldier. I immediately asked him to raise his hands and hand over his papers and weapons. The prisoner was very decent, did not offer any resistance and did not carry any weapons. I was very glad that it went off so smoothly, because I did not have a firearm with me either, only my sidearm. Of course, I had waved it wildly in order to arouse fear and terror in the prisoner. I now asked him to gather up his parachute and walk a few steps in front of me. I wanted to lead him to the station (his light flak unit in Laubenheim, Erg. d. A.) and deliver him there. The prisoner complied with this request without contradiction. I had no difficulties whatsoever with him.

In the meantime, well over 100 onlookers had gathered, men, women and children, "simple folk" and functionaries of the Nazi state and party, Germans and also foreigners - Polish and French forced laborers who had to work in Laubenheim. SS-Untersturmführer Tesch had joined the crowd. He had ridden his motorcycle to Laubenheim and had parked it at the corner of the road leading from Bingerbrück to Langenlonsheim ("Hauptstraße", today: Bundesstraße 48 "Naheweinstraße") and the farm road leading up into the vineyards ("Hungergraben", today: Kreisstraße 43 to Dorsheim) at the "Schnell" house. He took off his military coat and his paddock and stowed everything in the panniers of the motorcycle. In order not to leave his pistol at the motorcycle, he put it loosely into the (trouser) pocket. Then he joined the crowd.

The crowd was led by the mayor of the village, he was followed by the two German anti-aircraft soldiers, the soldiers had Eugene Kalinowsky in their midst. The American made a frightened and depressed impression, he still carried his parachute with both hands in front of his chest. Behind this group went the NSDAP Ortsgruppenleiter von Laubenheim and other local officials, as well as SS-Untersturmführer Tesch.

The vast majority of the people were hostile to the prisoner and expressed this. There were words like gangsters, murderers of women and children and: "Beat him to death! But there was no assault on him. While the "simple people" badly insulted Kalinovsky and demanded that he be killed, the officials walking behind the soldiers got into a dispute about who was responsible for him and what should happen to him. In the process, the local group leader, who was also the local leader of the Land Guard, claimed the prisoner for himself. The two soldiers and another soldier of the light flak unit left no doubt that Kalinowsky was their prisoner and that they would take him to their battery command post and unit commander in the village. Tesch took little part in these insults and discussions. In general, he behaved inconspicuously.

The path led them all down the farm road ("Hungergraben") into the village. When they reached the first houses of Laubenheim (shortly before the junction of the farm road with the main road) and came to the Renner barn and the Jäger house, Tesch suddenly pulled out his pistol and shouted several times to the mayor, who was walking at the head, to step aside a little. At close range he shot Eugene Kalinowsky in the back of the neck. He fell forward and remained lying in his blood on the right side of the street, still ranting. A citizen of Laubenheim probably hit his head with his shod foot and said: "It's good that you have to die, you dog!"



The scene of the murder of Eugene Kalinowsky on October 15, 1944
(with the contemporary witness Günter Best), 2016.



The two soldiers of the light anti-aircraft unit picked up the dead man from the path, laid him down on the nearest house and covered him with his parachute. The reaction of the bystanders was different. Some said it was good that he died. But most of the spectators disapproved of Tesch's deed. The reason for this was at one point in fact themselves, but above all the concern that she and her place could be held responsible by the approaching Americans.

The two anti-aircraft soldiers who captured the plane then reported the incident to their local office. There was quite a mess in the office. A written report was not prepared, but the two of them verbally reported the incident to the clerk present there and delivered Kalinowsky's papers, a few packets of cigarettes and the airplane provisions.

6. Burial and exhumation

The dead Kalinowsky, who was still lying very close to the scene of the crime, was brought to the fire station, placed in a temporary coffin, and raised. While the funeral was being considered, the fate of gunner Richard Ellwart, who had parachuted off with or without a defective parachute and died on impact in the Heddesheim area, was revealed. A funeral for Ellwart had already been arranged at the local cemetery. Thereupon the Laubenheimer decided to bury Eugene Kalinowsky and Richard Ellwart together on the cemetery of Heddesheim. Accordingly, the cemetery caretaker in Heddesheim dug two graves the following day, October 16, 1944. In the evening, some soldiers of the anti-aircraft unit brought the coffin with Eugene Kalinowsky to Heddesheim and placed it with Richard Ellwart's.

The next day, October 17, 1944, the two were buried in Heddesheim's municipal cemetery. The names of the dead were not yet known there, the entry in the camp book of the gravesites reads: running no. 35, grave no. 1095, unknown American pilot, place of death: Heddesheim, buried on 17.10.1944 - grave no. 1096, unknown American aviator, place of death: Laubenheim, buried on 17.10.1944. One day later, on October 18, 1944, the Wehrmacht site elder of Bad Kreuznach had identified the two deceased by name and further details.

Name des Angehörigen (Bestohler)		Wehrmachtteil:	
Nachweis über Sterbefall und Beisetzung eines Wehrmachtangehörigen			
Vorname:	Eugene Kalinowski	Begräbnisort:	Heddesheim
Nachname:	11105754 F 43-43 C	Stamm:	Kreuznach Wehrkreis XII
Dienstgrad:	Anné Kalinowski Stoker Lane Sitterfield Mass.	Friedhof:	Gemeinschaftsfriedhof
Truppenteil (letzte Einheit):	amerikanischer Flieger	Christlich oder jüdisch (mit *):	Beisetzungsart: 17.10.
Geburtsort:	Laubenheim	Gemeinde Grablage und Nr.:	
Todesort:	Laubenheim	Anschrift der Angehörigen:	
Erkenntnisnummer:			
Nationalität (nur bei Verdacht, ob Feind):		Die Vernehmung des mit der Beisetzung sich Zugewandten:	
Todesursache: Verwundung — Krankheit — Unfall — Selbstmord — Herabstürzung*)		a) im Felde (Kriegsgefangen, ob, bei, über):	
Art der Verletzung oder Krankheit: Kopfverletzung		b) im Heimatgebiet (Wehrkreis):	
		durch Luftangriff: ja — nein *	
		c) im Ausland (Zitat):	
Ort der Beisetzung:			
den 18. 10. 1944			 Oberst und Standortältester
*) Todesursache ist gelbes.			
Wehr-Gr. Nr. 25-26 XII Wehrkreis			

Evidence of the German Wehrmacht of October 18, 1944 on the death and funeral of Eugene Kalinowsky.

Wehrmacht (Deutschland)
aus Bad Reichenhahn (Frankfurt)

Wehrmachtteil:

Nachweis über Sterbefall und Beisetzung eines Wehrmachtangehörigen

Familiennamen: Richard Y Ellwart Gegenstandort: Heddesheim
 Geburtsnr.: 35633443 F 43-444 Kreis: Kreuznach Wehrkreis: XII
 Wohnort: Helen-B-Ellwart Friedhof: Gemeindefriedhof
 Dienstgrad: 5542 N Maplewood Ehrenfeld oder jünger Teil*: Disziplin am: 17.10.44
 Truppenteil (je bei Einsein): amerik. Flieger (Name Stablage und Nr.):
 Geburtsort: Siebach Nationalität der Angehörigen:
 Geburtsort: Heddesheim Die Vernehmung wird bei Befragten ist gegeben:
 Entlassungsort: a) im Felde (Kriegsgefangen od. def. Verh.):
 Nationalität (nur bei Heerführ. od. Geistl.): b) im Heimatgebiet (Wehrkreis):
 Todesursache: Brennbrand — Brandstiftung — Unfall — durch Luftangriff: ja — nein*
Schlachtfeld — Urteilsbefreiung*) c) im Ausland (Zust.):
 Art der Verlegung oder Brandstiftung: Schlachtfeld
(Stelle Brandstiftung)
 am 18. 10. 1944
 * Militärärztliche Anstalten:
 Stand-Nr. 02. III. 24. XII. Bismarck

[Signature]
Oberstabsarzt



Evidence of the German Wehrmacht of October 18, 1944
about the death and funeral of Richard J. Ellwart.

After the war, the Americans also came close in their search for missing airplane crews. Based on their "Missing Air Crew Reports" (MACR), which were already created during the war, they found the graves of Eugene Kalinowsky and Richard Ellwart. In late June 1945, an American special task force exhumed the bodies of the two and transferred them to the American military cemetery in Hamm, a suburb of Luxembourg City. The two were buried there on June 27, 1945.



Allied cemetery of honor in Luxembourg-Hamm.

7. Return home

As it is customary in such cases, the American forces sought to locate the relatives of the two dead, inform them of their deaths and encourage the transfer of their remains to the United States. The search for the relatives was successful in both cases. Unlike Richard Ellwart, Eugene Kalinowsky's family was very interested in his fate and his transfer to the USA. For his mother, who was now separated from her husband, the news was a shock.



Mother of Eugene Kalinowsky.

Local Youth Killed on Last Mission

Sgt. Kalinowsky Had Been Listed As Missing

Mr. and Mrs. Vasily Kalinowsky of Shaker Lane, West Pittsfield, have been notified that their son, Staff Sgt. Eugene Kalinowsky, 24, has been listed as killed in action on the same day he was reported

Staff Sgt. Eugene Kalinowsky

missing. A tail gunner on a B-24, he was flying his 50th and last mission over Germany on Oct. 15 before an expected furlough home.

Sgt. Kalinowsky entered the Air Forces in November, 1942, and prior to that time was employed by the Daily Trucking Company in Dalton. He attended Pittsfield High School.

He is survived by four brothers, Marine Sgt. Alex, now at Camp Pendleton, Cpl. Serge, John, and Michael; and two sisters, Nina, and Mrs. Jack MacHaffie.

Newspaper article about him in the local US press.

For whatever reason, they were told a fictional story against their better judgment. According to this story, Eugene, who was captured by German soldiers, was not murdered behind his back and at close range by an SS man. Rather, it was farmers from the village who picked up Eugene and maltreated him with a pitchfork and then killed him.

To better cope with the loss of their loved one, Eugene's oldest sister Viola and younger brother Alex, who was a sergeant in the United States Marine Corps (USMC), asked for personal belongings of their brother. Above all, they were interested in a special watch that Eugene had always worn. But their efforts were in vain. In response, they were informed that there were no personal belongings of his, especially no watch. Only a sum of money in the amount of \$5.64 was left from the dead man. He was given a check to his mother.

At the instigation of his mother, Eugene Kalinowsky's body was transferred from Luxembourg to New York and then on to Pittsfield in the summer of 1948. On August 27, 1948, he was laid to his last rest in the Pittsfield cemetery with military honors. Also present at that time was Eugene's oldest niece, whose baby shoes he had put around his neck as a good luck charm when he had to go to war. It has remained in her memory that the coffin with the mortal remains of her uncle was wrapped in the American flag, the star banner. Eugene Kalinowsky's grave in the Pittsfield cemetery still exists today.

Eugene's parents never got over the tragic death and loss of their oldest son. But Eugene's father, who had become an American citizen in the meantime, was also proud of his son, who died in the war. As long as he could physically, he participated in the parade every year and the service on Memorial Day, the last Monday in May, in honor of those who died in the war for the United States.



Entrance to the Pittsfield Cemetery.



Grave of Eugene Kalinowsky in Pittsfield.

The grave is maintained by his nieces and nephews, most of whom still live in Pittsfield. They are a cross-section of the American population: one was an assistant to a U.S. congresswoman, one nephew was a math professor at a college, another nephew is a food manager, another is a truck driver, and one niece is a nurse.



Eugene Kalinowsky's niece Carole Brooks (left) with her family.

8. The memorial stone for Eugene Kalinowsky

Another stone is now inaugurated 76 years after the murder of Eugene Kalinowsky and on the occasion of his 100th birthday in memory of him. It will be placed near the Renner barn in the village of Laubenheim on the district road to Dorsheim, where Eugene Kalinowsky was murdered behind his back on October 15, 1944.

May this memorial stone keep alive the memory of the young American Eugene Kalinowsky and of the millions of foreign victims to whom the criminal Nazi regime and its many, far too many helpers brought unspeakable suffering and death. At the same time, the events of that time are a reminder to us: Never again war! Never again fascism!



Memorial stone for Eugene Kalinowsky in Laubenheim/Nahe.

