

Within an hour William received five pints of blood, and extremely high quantity in such a short period of time. Even this amount, however, was less than necessary to keep pace with the rapid loss. Since the bleeding was internal, it could not be stopped without critical major surgery which William could not have survived at any cost.

About fifteen minutes after treatment was begun he regained consciousness momentarily and asked about the welfare of his pilot. Seconds later he lapsed into deep shock amid the frantic medical procedures in progress to save his life.

At NO time, did William give me any indication of suffering or pain. Because of his severe state of shock he was, fortunately, unable to feel pain of any nature.


At 7:30 PM Captain A.W. Slifer, and Commander James F. Kelly Jr., Captain and Executive Officers of USS GRIDLEY, being extremely concerned about William's condition, asked if there would be a chance to evacuate William to a nearby aircraft carrier. In desperation they maneuvered GRIDLEY at maximum possible speed toward the carrier and arranged immediate airlift when possible. Meanwhile Corpsmen HM1 Newton, HM2 Dickson, and SN Landsverk, myself, and a host of other volunteers carefully carried William to the fantail of GRIDLEY while continuing artificial respiration and administering blood.

When we reached that area of the ship it became apparent to me that life had left William's body and at 8:04 PM on the 6th of January 1967 he was pronounced dead.

What we accomplished in that short eighty minutes is difficult to tell, but perhaps William used that space of time to perfect his final peace with God, and if we allowed him that much no sacrifice on our part will have been too great.

In deepest sympathy I remain,

Sincerely yours,


Robert P. Lonergan Jr.
LT Medical Corps USNR