



## Survival Top 40 — Case #63 — ESS = 273

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## Round Trip To Allentown

Unlike the typical subject of hypnotic age regression who seeks relief from symptoms unexplained in their current life, Tim Stewart sought only to write an article for a national magazine. A computer programmer and freelance journalist, Stewart was living in Albuquerque, New Mexico, when he was given the assignment to write about past-life therapy. To research the subject, about which he was more than dubious, he underwent several regressions in the offices of hypno-therapists Irene Larason and Elsa LaFlame, Ph.D.<sup>1</sup>

During his fourth session, Stewart experienced being a soldier, and seemed to be reliving battles somewhere in North Africa during the second world war. Now, it is not unusual for hypnotized subjects to recall emotional scenes of fighting and dying, but Stewart went way beyond such general descriptions. He not only gave the soldier's name – William Max – but named his army unit – the 47<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 9<sup>th</sup> Division – and gave his blood type, his date of death, and his army ID number. Furthermore, Stewart recalled that Max was born on May 27, 1919 and had grown up in Allentown, Pennsylvania, that he was married and had children.

And so, as any good journalist would, Stewart called the main library in Allentown and inquired as to the existence of a previous resident named William Max. One month later, Stewart received a copy of an obituary from the local Allentown newspaper dated April 11, 1943. It read,

in part, "Fun-loving Bill Max, popular basketball player on the Jewish Community Center team and the 6<sup>th</sup> Ward Democratic Club team, went down fighting in defense of his country. ... The official War Department message sent to his father, Jacob Max, 945½ N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Allentown, read: 'The Secretary of War desires that I tender his deep sympathy to you in the loss of your son Private William Max.' "

These facts and others confirmed in the obituary encouraged Stewart to make inquiries of the Department of Defense. Yes he was told, the identification number Stewart had seen on Max's dog tags while entranced did, indeed, belong to an army Private named William Max, who was killed while fighting in North Africa, in 1943.

This story presents strong evidence for Survival, but there is an epilogue that might make it even more convincing to those doubters who would grasp at the straw of Super-ESP and claim that Stewart got all the information by clairvoyantly accessing old newspaper clippings and military archives. In 1993, Stewart returned to Pennsylvania – a place he had not been since he was a toddler – to attend the funeral of his favorite uncle. While at the funeral, Stewart encountered an elderly woman who was a stranger to him, yet she insisted that he looked familiar to her. In response to her queries, he told her his name and the names of various relatives, but she could not make the connection she sought. Then Stewart asked her name and she replied, "Thelma Max."

Further conversations revealed that Thelma Max was the widow of the brother of William Max. Once she made the connection, she

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<sup>1</sup> The information in this case report was adapted from a segment of the television show *Sightings* broadcast on CBS on 6 May 1995. The case would have an even higher ESS score if it were to be corroborated by other sources. Therefore, if the subject, Tim Stewart, or anyone knowing him reads this, please send us a note via [aeces@mail.com](mailto:aeces@mail.com).

realized that it was her deceased brother-in-law she was reminded of when she looked into Stewart's eyes. Stewart and Max do have similar features, but an outsider would never think they were the same man.

Because of this "chance" encounter, Stewart met other members of the Max family, visited his childhood home, and wandered the neighborhood where William had grown up. Harold Schentzle, a boyhood friend of William Max heard about Stewart's incredible story and arranged a meeting. Schentzle had serious doubts about Stewart's claims and he thought he had the perfect way to settle the matter. After admitting that there was some resemblance, Schentzle asked Stewart if he could recall the last thing that Max said to him prior to embarking for the war. In reply, Stewart told Schentzle that Max had said, "In 1940, I had a dream that if I went into the service and I got shipped overseas, I would never make it home. I'd be killed." Schentzle, who was convinced that Max had never told that dream to anyone but him, fell back in his chair as the blood drained from his face. "To be honest with you," Schentzle reported, "I got goose pimples."

In the ensuing years, most of the Max family have come to accept Stewart as one of them.

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