Accident No. 45-9-5-577

Checked by [Signature]

Date: 9/30/47

Analyzed by [Signature]

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Notes [Blank]

1225:9-43
**WAR DEPARTMENT**
**U.S. ARMY AIR FORCES**

**REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT**

(1) Place: AAF Station 130, APO 557
(2) Date: 3 September 1944
(3) Time: 1:00

**AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model:** B-17G
(5) A.F. No.: 42-374170
(6) Station: AAF 130

**Organization:** (7) 8th AF
(8) 379th BG
(9) 375th BS

**PERSONNEL**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>DEPT</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>RATING</th>
<th>SERIAL No.</th>
<th>RACE</th>
<th>PERSONNEL CLASS</th>
<th>BRANCH</th>
<th>AIR FORCE OR COMMAND</th>
<th>RESULT TO PERSONNEL</th>
<th>USE OF FAREBEIGHT</th>
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<tr>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>SCHULTZ, CHARLES J.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-01735.2</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
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<td>WILSON, ALFRED P., JR.</td>
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<td>T-68757.2</td>
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<td>HOBBS, RICHARD A.</td>
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<td>KALMBURG, GEORGE E.</td>
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<td>364260395</td>
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**PROFESSIONAL DATA**

- **Last name:** (Last name first) F. SCHULTZ, CHARLES J.
- **Rank:** 2nd Lt.
- **Branch:** AC
- **Air Force or Command:** 8th AF
- **Result to Personnel:** None

**Attached for flying:** 8th AF

**Original rating:** Pilot
**Present rating:** Pilot
**Instrument rating:** None

**First Pilot Hours:**
- **This type:** 2-17
- **This model:** 0-17
- **Last 90 days:** 729.20
- **Total:** 220.50

**AIRCRAFT DAMAGE**

- **Left outer wing panel repairable damage, left tailplane and left wing tip damaged beyond repair.**

**WEATHER AT THE TIME OF ACCIDENT**

- Visibility 25 - 20 miles
- Wind 200 degrees at 65 knots

**NATURE OF ACCIDENT**

- Serial collision, aircraft was leading the lead squadron, high group of... [text cut off]

**CAUSE OF ACCIDENT**

- Poor technique on pilots part. Pilots failed to maintain proper formation...

**CLASSIFICATION**

- C.G.A.A.F. - RESTRICTED

**BY AUTHORITY OF**

- [Signature]

**DATE:** 2/13/46

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*Note: The document contains additional text and data not fully transcribed.*
DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT:

Aircraft #2-9770 was flying in the low squadron lead position in the high group and aircraft #43-37574 was leading the second flight of the low squadron, returning from a combat mission. After receiving permission from the group leader the pilot of aircraft #43-37574 moved his flight into the "Diamond" position (below and in trail of the group lead flight) and flew in that position a few minutes before the accident occurred. The low squadron leader in aircraft #2-9770 failed to maintain his briefed position in the formation, allowing his aircraft to slide to the right and directly above aircraft #43-37574. In attempting to move back to the left the low squadron leader collided with aircraft #43-37574, his left wing tip striking the dorsal fin and rudder of aircraft #43-37574.

CONCLUSION:

Responsibility for this accident is attributed 100% to personnel error. The pilot of the low squadron lead aircraft #2-9770, due to poor formation-flying technique, failed to maintain his briefed position in the formation and collided with aircraft #43-37574.

RECOMMENDATION:

That pilots be indoctrinated with the extreme importance of holding a steady position while flying in close formation.

Date 11 September 1944

RGO L. Francis,
Major, Air Corps,
Aircraft Accident Committee.

Wilbur D. Eielson,
Major, Air Corps,
Aircraft Accident Committee.

[Signature]

[Signature]
**REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT**

**Place:** AAF Station 130, A.P.O. 557  
**Date:** 3 September 1942  
**Time:** 1300

**AIRCRAFT:** B-17G  
**Serial No.:** 42-3757  
**Branch:** 8th AF

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<th>NAME</th>
<th>(Last name first)</th>
<th>(Middle initial)</th>
<th>(Rank)</th>
<th>(Branch)</th>
<th>(Personnel class)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHITMAN, HARRY J.</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>AC</td>
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**Assigned to Command and Air Force (Command and Air Force) (Branch) | (Class) | (Personnel class) |
8th AF | 157th | 749th |

**Attended for flying | (Branch) | (Personnel class) |
8th AF | 157th | 749th |

**Original rating | Present rating | Instrument rating | (Class) | (Personnel class) |
5-12-43 | 5-12-43 | 5-12-43 | 20-4-43 | 20-4-43 |

**First Pilot Hours**
(at the time of this accident)

- This type: B-17
- This model: B-17A
- Last 90 days: 206.15
- Total: 421.15

**AIRCRAFT DAMAGE**

- Dorsal fin and rudder damaged beyond repair.

**WEATHER:** Visibility 15 - 20 miles, 5/10 - 10/10 cloud at 13000 ft., wind 280 degrees at 30 knots.

**CAUSE OF ACCIDENT:** Aerial collision. Aircraft was leading the second flight, low squadron, high wing of a combat wing formation.

- Pilot leading low squadron failed to maintain briefed position in formation, sliding over and into the second flight leading of the low squadron.

**AIF Form D not submitted.**
DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT:

Aircraft No. 43-37574 was flying in the No. 4 position of the low squadron, high group, returning from a combat mission. The pilot received permission from the group leader to move his flight from its normal position into the "Diamond" (below and in trail of group lead flight) and flew in that position a few minutes before the accident occurred. The low squadron leader in A/C 42-297470 failed to maintain his briefed position in the formation, allowing his aircraft to slide to the right and directly above aircraft 43-37574. In attempting to move back to the left the low squadron leader collided with aircraft 43-37574, his left wing tip striking the dorsal fin and rudder of aircraft 43-37574.

CONCLUSION:

Responsibility for this accident is attributed 100% to personnel error. The pilot of the low squadron lead aircraft 42-297470, due to poor formation-flying technique, failed to maintain his briefed position in the formation and collided with aircraft 43-37574.

RECOMMENDATION:

That pilots be indoctrinated with the extreme importance of holding a steady position while flying in close formation.

Rod L. Francis
Major, Air Corps
Aircraft Accident Committee.

WILBUR E. SNOW
Major, Air Corps
Aircraft Accident Committee.

Date 11 September 1944

CONFIDENTIAL
I was flying as low squadron leader on the return from an operational mission. I was forced out of my position by the second element low squadron lead. Assuming he had simply over run his position, I waited until he had moved back slightly and then moved back to my former position. He then dropped down out of sight and slightly after came up suddenly under my left wing. I immediately tried to pull up and over to the right. My left wing was held down, probably by his wash, consequently his vertical stabilizer caught my wing tip as he went by.

Charles J. Schultz
2nd Lt., Air Corps.
After coming off the bomb run, I pulled back down out of the diamond and flew behind aircraft no. 42-97470, the low squadron leader for some time. As the low squadron lead seemed to be having trouble staying in formation, it was quite difficult for me to fly proper formation on him and make it all easy for my wing men, so I called the box leader and requested permission to pull up into the diamond again and fly my element there.

He gave me permission and I pulled up in behind and below the lead. After flying there for about twenty minutes, I saw aircraft no. 42-97470 pull up off to my left and he started to skid in towards me. I violently dived the ship and he slid over the top of me, then my co-pilot again pushed the wheel forward as he saw him skidding back in again from the right. I caught another glimpse of his ship on the left and above me again, and then I pushed the wheel forward again to be sure I avoided him. He disappeared from my sight and a few seconds later I felt a jar on the rear of the ship and I dropped down still further to try and maintain control without hitting the lead ship. I flew below and to the right of the box lead until I had checked my damage, then pulled back into the diamond and continued on, after calling the box leader and telling him of my trouble, and asking him to advise aircraft no. 42-97470 to stay out away from me.

Harry J. Whitman
2nd Lt., Air Corps.
I was flying in the number 6 position of the high box, low squadron. Coming away from the target R for Roger or ship No. h2-97L70 which had been flying No. 1 in low squadron, was flying just low enough and out of formation enough to put me in the lead box's, high squadron's prop wash. My element leader No. h3-3757h called the high box leader for permission to fly his element in the diamond. Permission was granted.

When we pulled up in position No. h2-97L70 pulled out and to the left of me, No. h2-107L6h. We flew that position for a few moments and then he started sliding toward me. I pulled back to keep from getting hit. He continued sliding and slid over my element leader. No. h3-3757h must have caught a glimpse of him as he pushed his nose violently down. At that moment No. h2-97L70 left wing dropped and hit No. h3-3757h vertical stabilizer.

Brig. Gen. Lehigh
2nd Lt., Air Corps.
CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS 457TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Flying Control Officer
AAF Station 130
U. S. Army

4 September 1944

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident Report on B-17's No. 43-37574 and 42-97470.

TO: Aircraft Accident Officer, 457th Bombardment Group, APO 557, U. S. Army.

This accident occurred while the aircraft were flying on an operational mission 3 September 1944. This accident was not observed by any Flying Control personnel.

[Signature]

STEVEN T. ROSS
1stLt., YCG,
Duty Flying Control Officer.