



Accident No. 49-1-3-8

Date

Checked by

G.M.

1-19-44

Analyzed by

R.L.

1-20-44

Copied for Wright

Field by \_\_\_\_\_

Notes

Attention: Lt. Col. Bagator  
San Antonio

22519-43

Accident No. 44-1-3-8

Pilot's Name Ashby, Hugh R.

04 Nature Group Spins at high altitude

14 Specific Nature Without engine failure

73 Underlying Nature Structural failure due to overstressing at time of accident.

100% Cause Group 02 Technique

27 Specific Cause Momentary lack of proficiency

11 Underlying Cause Faulty operation of aircraft leading to malfunctioning of

Cause Group Specific Cause material

Underlying Cause

Safety Rec.

WAR DEPARTMENT  
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES  
REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place 12 Miles South West of Delta, Utah. (2) Date 3 January 1944 (3) Time 1600  
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17G (5) A. F. No. 42-31547 (6) Station AAB, Wendover Field, Utah  
Organization: (7) 2nd AF, 15th Wing (8) 457th Bomb Gp (9) 749th Bombardment Squadron (H)  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

DDTY (10)	NAME (Last name first) (11)	RATING (12)	SERIAL NO. (13)	RANK (14)	PERSONNEL CLASS (15)	BRANCH (16)	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND (17)	RESULT TO PERSONNEL (18)	USE OF PARACHUTE (19)
P	Ashby, Hugh R.	P	0-735499	1st Lt	01	A.C.	2nd AF	Fatal	No
CP	Bible, Mervin J.	CP	0-747372	2nd Lt	01	A.C.	2nd AF	Fatal	No
N	McRae, Clarence	N	0-797355	2nd Lt	01	A.C.	2nd AF	Fatal	No
B	Newman, John W.	B	0-735911	2nd Lt	01	A.C.	2nd AF	Fatal	No
AEG	Barboza, Joseph (MI)	AEG	31133146	T/Sgt	38 20	A.C.	2nd AF	Fatal	No
AEG	Cook, Byron, E. Jr.	AEG	38171242	S/Sgt	38 20	A.C.	2nd AF	Minor	S
ROG	Duck, Neil D.	ROG	19012372	T/Sgt	38 20	A.C.	2nd AF	Minor	S
ROG	Hunt, Ernest E.	ROG	39188001	S/Sgt	38 20	A.C.	2nd AF	Minor	S
AG	Klaba, Junior L.	AG	32545734	S/Sgt	38 20	A.C.	2nd AF	Minor	S
AAG	Timmons, Robert A.	AAG	16085956	S/Sgt	38 20	A.C.	2nd AF	Fatal	No
P	Huntley, Frank A.	P	0-804668	2nd Lt	01	A.C.	2nd AF	Minor	S

(20) Ashby, Hugh R. (21) 0-735499 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 01 (24) Air Corps  
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)  
Assigned (25) 2nd AF, 15th Wing (26) 457th Bomb (27) 749th Bombardment (H) (28) AAB, Wendover Field, U.  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
Attached for flying (29) 2nd AF, 15th Wing (30) 457th Bomb (31) 749th Bombardment (32) AAB, Wendover, Utah.  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 1-4-43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 1-4-43 Instrument rating (37) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:  
(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type	(42) Instrument time last 6 months
(39) This model	(43) Instrument time last 30 days
(40) Last 90 days	(44) Night time last 6 months
(41) Total	(45) Night time last 30 days

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE F

DAMAGE	(46) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft	W.S. Completely Demolished
(47) Engine(s)	W.S. W.S. W.S. W.S. Completely Demolished
(48) Propeller(s)	W.S. W.S. W.S. W.S. Completely Demolished

(50) Weather at the time of accident  ceiling of Wendover estimated 6000 feet overcast, visibility seven to ten miles, surface wind Northwesterly six to twelve miles per hour. Ceiling at Salt Lake 700 to 800 feet overcast, visibility restricted to 3/4 to 1 mile in light snow, surface wind westerly five to eight miles per hour.  
(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident Yes  
(52) Cleared from AAB, Wendover Utah (53) To Grand Island AAB (54) Kind of clearance IFR  
(55) Pilot's mission (Group Movement) Cross Country Flight to Grand Island, Nebraska  
(56) Nature of accident Collision with ground in full flight.  
(57) Cause of accident Loss of certain control surfaces due to excessive stress created by pilot technique.  
(58) Unsatisfactory Report Submitted: None.

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

(Brief narrative of accident. Include statement of responsibility and recommendations for action to prevent repetition)

After normal take-off at 1441 PWT from Wendover Army Air Base on proposed cross country flight to Grand Island, Nebraska. B-17G serial No. 42-31547 started climb through overcast. Climbing too steeply, pilot stalled aircraft and fell off into a spin. Recovery was too abrupt imposing heavy stresses on aircraft and evidenced "black-out" of pilot passenger. There after pilot again attempted to climb through overcast and again stalled and dropped into a spin and in attempted recovery imposed severe stresses on aircraft and crew to the extent of loss of right aileron and part of tail surfaces. Due to this damage the pilot was never able to affect complete control of aircraft. Five crew members parachuted from the aircraft before it crashed into a mountain while descending in a steep spiral.

FINDINGS: It is the opinion of this Accident Board that the stalls indicated above were the results of faulty technique of the pilot. Testimony indicates there were no other factors, such as ice, to cause the aircraft to stall.

RESPONSIBILITY: 100% Pilot technique.

RECOMMENDATIONS: An effort toward even closer surveillance of individual pilot progress in instrument flying proficiency.

Ezekiel Y. Napier  
EZEKIEL Y. NAPIER,  
Colonel, Air Corps, President

Willis G. Carter  
WILLIS G. CARTER,  
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps, Member

Hugh D. Wallace  
HUGH D. WALLACE,  
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps, Member.



Signature

Merle B. Crum  
(Investigating Officer)  
MERLE B. CRUM,  
Captain, Air Corps

Date 8 January 1944

Summary of Pertinent Testimony of Witnesses before the  
Aircraft Accident Classification Committee Investigat-  
ing the Crash on 3 January 1944 of B-17G Airplane,  
#42-31547 near Delle, Utah.

- 2 X 1. Lt. Huntley, a first pilot himself but riding as a passenger on this trip, states that he was in the cockpit at the beginning of the flight and personally testifies that the de-icers and pitot heat were turned on before pilot ever entered overcast.
2. First indication of difficulty was a prolonged shaking of the airplane which terminated in first spin.
- 3 X 3. After recovery from the first spin, the radio operator, by interphone, asked the pilot what the trouble was, to which he says the pilot replied that he did not know but thought it was ice. The radio operator then looked at the leading edges of the tail surfaces and saw no ice. Further, the pilot then stated he was going to try it again.
- 7 X 4. Thirty-nine (39) other B-17 airplanes successfully ascended through this same overcast all within two (2) hours of the same period.
- 5 X 5. Load distribution was proper.
- 4 X 6. Second spin occurred just as ship was beginning to break out at top of overcast, or at least was near enough to the top that passengers could see that they were going to break out soon.
- 6 X 7. Just before second spin radio operator heard navigator ask pilot on interphone to increase air speed.
8. Radio operator states that on a previous occasion in Texas while riding with this pilot, the ship stalled at an altitude above 20,000 feet, fell over in a dive, and recovered finally after a long fall.
9. Armorer gunner watched aileron stripping away and states this occurred during attempted recovery from the second spin.
10. One witness felt that the pilot was climbing "on a zigzag course, trying to find the thin spots in the overcast."

SPECIAL ORDER  
NO 7

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR BASE

Wendover Fld Utah  
7 Jan 1944

- E X T R A C T -

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Following named O are aptd to Board of O's to investigate Company Fund of 315th Base Hq & AB Sq and to make recommendations on findings thereof. Auth AR 420-5.

DETAIL FOR THE BOARD

MAJ	WILLARD R BEALL	0168778	AC
1LT	GEORGE H WYGANT JR	0573840	AC
2LT	EDWARD J WHERLAND	01281235	FD

2. Following named O are aptd to Base Aircraft Accident Committee to investigate acft accident occurring 3 Jan 44 near Delle Utah. Auth Memo 150-9 Hq 2AF 19 July 43. Board aptd by par 25 SO 358 this Hq, 43, is hereby reld.

DETAIL FOR THE BOARD

COL	EZEKIEL W NAPIER	017668	AC
LT COL	WILLIS G CARTER	0274929	AC
LT COL	HUGH D WALLACE	021232	AC
MAJ	GORDON H HAGGARD	0321772	MC
CAPT	HARRY E LAWRENCE	0478857	AC
CAPT	GAYLE W MAILE	0370351	AC
CAPT	MERLE B CRUM	0426071	AC (Investigating O)

3. Following named O and EM, 457th Bomb Gp (H), are trfd to 315th Base Hq & AB Sq. Auth AR 615-200.

ZLT (1024)	FRANK A HUNTLEY	084668	AC	
S Sgt (748)	Byron F Cook Jr	38171242	T Sgt (757) Neil D Buck	19012372
S Sgt (757)	Ernest E Hunt	39188001	S Sgt (612) Junior L Klaks	32545734

4. DONALD O GAIR  
ZLT AC 0873042  
lv of absence granted this O, Ded 1st Awys Comd Sq, by par 23 SO 336 this Hq 43, is further extended 5 days. Auth TWX FCR2465 LAF Santa Monica Calif 5 Jan 44.

5. Franklin C Kunze  
Sgt 16106096  
(escort)  
so much of par 8 SO 6 this Hq cs pertaining to this EM, 315th Base Hq & AB Sq, on temp dy at San Francisco, Calif as reads "Leslie Kunze, T/5, 17092008" is amended to read "Sgt Franklin C Kunze, 16106096.

6. HAROLD W KEENAHAN  
ZLT AC 0867203  
so much of par 27 SO 6 this Hq cs as pertains to this O and reads "Upon completion this temp dy escort will proceed to AAB Rapid City SD in accordance with par 11 SO 6 this Hq cs" is amended to read "Upon completion this temp dy escort will return this sta."

7. EXTRACT. (Confidential).

8. EXTRACT.

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By order of LT COL CARTER:

OFFICIAL:

*Michael J Hand*

MICHAEL J HAND  
CAPT AC  
Adjutant

MICHAEL J HAND  
CAPT AC  
Adjutant

par 1-8  
SO 7

BASE WEATHER STATION  
Army Air Base  
Wendover, Utah

5 January 1944.

SUBJECT: Weather Conditions During Aircraft Accident.

TO : Base Operations Officer, Army Air Base, Wendover, Utah.

1. At the request of the Base Operations Officer submitted below is a report on the weather conditions during the crash of a B-17 aircraft near Dells, Utah at approximately 1600 PWT on 3 January 1944.

2. The sky condition over Wendover from 1530 to 1630 PWT consisted of stratus overcast with bases at 10000 to 12000 MSL. The bases of these clouds lowered towards Salt Lake where precipitation ceilings of 800 feet were recorded during the same period. Salt Lake reported light snow showers and approximately one (1) mile visibility during the same period. Indications were that moderate turbulence and moderate icing existed in the clouds. The visibility at Wendover during the same period was greater than 10 miles. The surface winds were 10 miles per hour on the average and from the north west.

3. The following are true copies of the sequences as reported by stations nearest the accident.

1530PWT

DWV E60@ 146/32/31>6/992

SL N SPL 031710M P8@1S- 152/26/25>4/993/N3/4E1S1W1

1630

DWV E70@ 146/31/26>12/992/ BINOV

SL X SPL P8@3/4S- 65/26/25>5/994

*John F. White*

JOHN F. WHITE,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps,  
Assistant Station Weather Officer.



HEADQUARTERS  
FOUR HUNDRED FIFTY SEVENTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H), AIR FORCES  
OFFICE OF THE GROUP SURGEON

Wendover Field, Utah  
3 January 1944

C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the following listed officers and enlisted men were physically examined on 3 January 1944 by Major Gordon H. Haggard, M.C., Surgeon of the 749th Squadron and were all found physically fit for flying duty

This examination took place 1130 of day of the flight which ended in a crash.

CREW AND PASSENGERS • AIRCRAFT B-17 G-42-31547

Pilot-Ashby, Hugh R., 1st Lt., A.C. O-735499  
Co-Pilot-Bible, Marvin J., 2nd Lt., A.C. O-747372  
Navigator-McRae, Clarence 2nd Lt., A.C. O-797355  
Bombardier-Newman, John W., 2nd Lt., A.C. O-735911  
AEG-Barboza, Joseph (NMI) T/Sgt. 31133146  
AAEG-Cook, Byron, F. Jr., S/Sgt. 38171242  
ROG-Buck, Neil D., T/Sgt. 19012372  
AROG-Hunt, Ernest E., S/Sgt. 39183001  
AG-Klahs, Junior L., S/Sgt. 32545734  
AAG-Timmons, Robert A., S/Sgt. 16085956

Passengers

Huntley, Frank A., 2nd Lt., A.C. O-804668

*Gordon H. Haggard*  
GORDON, H. HAGGARD  
Major, Medical Corps  
GROUP SURGEON

HEADQUARTERS  
457TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HV)  
Office of the Operations Officer  
AAB, Wendover Field, Utah

4 January 1944

SUBJECT: Pilot's briefing before the 457th Bombardment Group flight from  
AAB, Wendover Field, Utah, to Grand Island, Nebraska, 3 January  
1944.

TO : Base Operations Officer, AAB, Wendover Field, Utah.

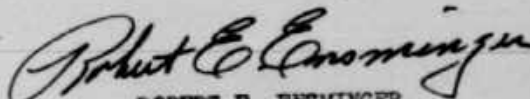
1. The undersigned hereby makes the following statements regarding pilots' briefing by Lt. Col. HUGH D. WALLACE before the flight to Grand Island, Nebraska, on 3 January 1944. Squadron CO's were briefed on the following points and then briefed their respective crews on the same points:

A. WEATHER: Pilots were briefed as to weather they might expect enroute and were advised of their alternate, Dalhart, Texas. Route and terminal forecasts were distributed to all pilots.

B. PROCEDURE: Pilots were advised to circle the field, to climb to altitude at this point, then to head on course. They were directed to stay on top until possible to let down east of the Rockies.

C. OPERATION: Pilots were thoroughly briefed regarding the use of deicer and anti-icer equipment, pitot heat, inter-coolers, increased RPM and power settings.

D. PERSONAL SAFETY: Crews were reminded to wear parachutes at all times.



ROBERT E. ENSMINGER  
Captain, Air Corps  
Ass't. Operations Officer



HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR BASE  
Office of the Operations Officer  
Wendover Field, Utah

12 January 1944.

SUBJECT: Report of Aircraft Accident.

TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Washington, D.C.  
Commanding General, 2nd Air Force, Colorado Springs, Colorado.  
Commanding Officer, 15th Operational Training Wing, Gowen Field,  
Boise, Idaho.

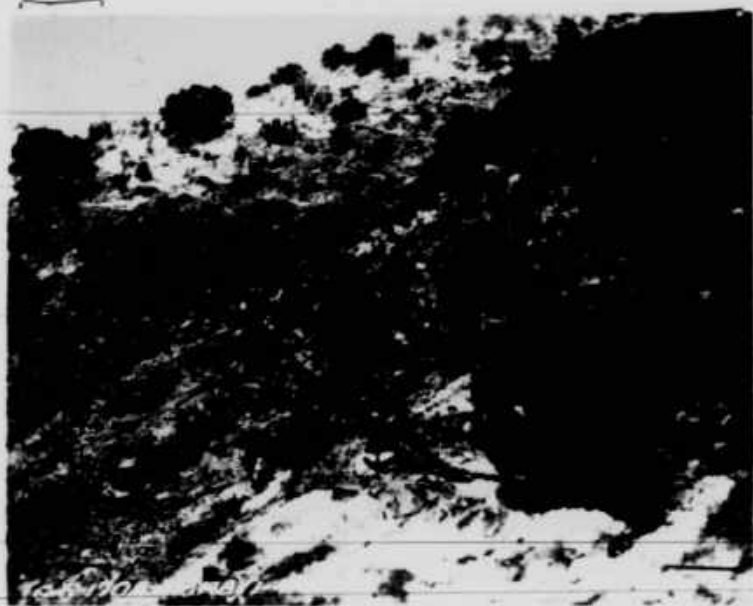
1. Total First Pilot Hours, needed on 1st Lt., Hugh R. Ashby as stated in Form #14, paragraphs thirty-eight (38) to and including paragraph forty-five (45), is not available at this time due to Lt. Hugh R. Ashby, Form #5 and Forms #1 and 1A being burnt in crash. An effort is being made to get this information and will be forwarded as soon as possible.

2. Maintenance Records of aircraft B-17G serial No. 42-31547 were also destroyed in the crash. An effort is being made to get the last maintenance record from the 457th Bombardment Group (H) now at another base, and will be forwarded as soon as received.

*Merle B. Crum*

MERLE B. CRUM,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
Accident Investigating Officer.













V

I N C O M I N G M E S S A G E

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES FOR ACTION A I O  
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY FOR INFO O M  
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA FOR FILE M & R

DATE 7 JAN 44

X

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

ADM NET

WSAL 361 V ASVL 175 NR 2 P

FROM CARTER COAB WENDOVER FIELD UTAH 070502Z

TO CHIEF FLYING SAFETY MISSION BLDG WINSTON SALEM N C

GR NC

WVF 20278Z

6 JANUARY FOUR FOUR 2100Z

FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SUBMITTED REGARDING B-17G SERIAL NO

42-31547 RPT B-17G SERIAL NO 42-31547 PD PILOT HUGH R ASHBY 1ST LT AC

2ND AF 457TH BB GP 749TH BB SQ WV AAB CMA WHICH CRASHED

APPROXIMATELY TWELVE MILES SOUTH WEST OD DELLE UTAH PD

AIRCRAFT LOCATED PD FOLLWOING LISTED PERSONNEL OF THIS AIRCRAFT MUST

BE CLASSIFIED AS FATAL PD

HUGH R ASHBY 1ST LT O-736499 PILOT FATAL

MARVIN J BIBLE 2ND LT O-747372 COPILOT FATAL

CLARENCE R MCRAE 2ND LT O-797355 NAVIGATOR FATAL

JOHN W NEWMAN 2ND LT O-735911 BOMBARDIER FATAL

JOSEPH BARBOZA T/SGT 31133146 ENGINEER FATAL

ROBERT A TIMMONS S/SGT 16085956 TAIL GUNNER FATAL

MEDICAL STAFF UNABLE TO IDENTIFY PERSONNEL ABOARD CRASHED AIRCRAFT PD

AIRCRAFT HIT SIDE OF MOUNTAIN AND EXPLODED CMA BURNING COMPLETELY PD

ENTIRE AREA SEARCHED BY GROUND SEARCHING PARTIES AND FROM THE AIR BY

AIRCRAFT THIS BASE PD POSSIBILITY OF ANY OF THE ABOVE LISTED CREW

18323 12-43

44-1-3-8  
1/3

I N C O M I N G M E S S A G E

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES FOR ACTION \_\_\_\_\_  
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY FOR INFO \_\_\_\_\_  
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA FOR FILE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

ADM NET

PAGE 2

MEMBERS PARACHUTING OR STILL BEING ALIVE AS DISCREDITED PD AUTHORITY  
STATION COMMANDANT PD CAUSE NOT DETERMINED AS YET PD AUTHORITY STATION  
COMMANDANT PD NO DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY PD AIRCRAFT WILL BE SURVEYED  
PD END

19/0833Z/BRR

1832:12-45

INCOMING MESSAGE

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES

OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR ACTION A I U

FOR INFO OFC MGMT

FOR FILE M & R

DATE 4 JANUARY 1944

X

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

ADM NET

WSAL361 V ARL 459 NR 20 PRTY

FROM CARTER COAB WENDOVER FIELD UTAH 040923Z

TO CHIEF FLYING SAFETY NISSEN BLDG WINSTON SALEM NORTH CAROLINA

NO CK

WVF 20166 PD

A. 3 JANUARY 1944 APPROXIMATELY 2300Z LOCATION SIX MILES SOUTH WEST OF DELLE CMA UTAH PD AIRCRAFT NOT LOCATED AS YET PD

B. HUGH B ASHBY 1ST A C 2ND AF 457TH BOMB GROUP /H/ 749TH BOMB SQ WENDOVER ARMY AIR BASE PD

C. PROBABLY MATERIAL FAILURE CMA RADIO OPERATOR REPORTS RIGHT AILERON TORE OFF IN MID-AIR AND VIOLENT SHIMMY OF TAIL SURFACES PD AUTHORITY BASE OPERATIONS OFFICER PD AIRCRAFT WENT INTO STEEP SPIRAL TO LEFT AND CRASHED IN MOUNTAIN PD

D. HUGH R ASHBY 1ST LT O-735499 PILOT PROBABLE FATAL PD

04 MARVIN J BIBLE 2ND LT O-747372 COPILOT PROBABLE FATAL PD

65 CLARENCE R MCRAE 2ND LT O-797355 NAVIGATOR PROBABLE FATAL PD

61 JOHN W NEWMAN 2ND LT O-735911 BOMBARDIER PROBABLE FATAL PD

68 FRANK A HUNTLEY 2ND LT O-804668 PASSENGER MAJOR INJURIES PD

62 JOSEPH BARBOZA T/SGT 31133146 ENGINEER PROBABLE FATAL PD

67 BYRON F COOK JR S/SGT 38171242 ASSISTENT ENGINEER MINOR INJURIES PD

71 NEIL D BUCK T/SGT 19012372 RADIO OPERATOR MINOR INJURIES PD

71 EARNEST E HUNT S/SGT 39188001 ASSISTANT RADIO OPERATOR MINOR INJURIES PD

PD

*Aircraft 5  
Engine 5555  
Prop 5555  
50%  
2063 TV 210%*

*44-1-3-8-6*

*44-1-3-8 (over) 103212-A3*

I N C O M I N G M E S S A G E

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES  
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY  
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR ACTION AIU  
FOR INFO OFC MGMT  
FOR FILE M & R

DATE 4 JAN 1944

X

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

ADM NET

CONTINUED OF MSG NR26

PAGE TWO...

64 JUNIOR L KLAHS S/SGT 32545734 ARMOR GUNNER MINOR INJURIES PD 2

64 ROBERT A TIMMONS S/SGT 16085956 TAIL GUNNER PROBABLE FATAL 4

E CROSS COUNTRY FLIGHT TO GRAND ISLAND NEBRASKA 457TH BOMB GROUP  
MOVEING TO NEW BASE PD

F. CEILING OF WENDOVER ESTIMATED 6000 FEET OVERCAST CMA VISIBILITY SEVEN  
TO TEN MILES

CMA SURFACE WIND NORTHWESTERLY SIX TO TWELVE MILES PER MILE PD CEILING  
AT SALT LAKE 700 TO 800 FEET OVERCAST CMA VISIBILITY RESTRICTED  
TO 3/4 TO 1 MILE IN LIGHT SNOW CMA SURFACE WIND NORTHERLY FIVE TO EIGHT  
MILES PER HOUR PD

G. B17-G SER NO 42-31547 RPT B17-G SER NO 42-31547 PD

H. WENDOVER ARMY AIR BASE WENDOVER UTAH PD

I. AIRCRAFT PROBABLE COMPLETE WRECK PD

J. PROBABLE MATERIAL FAILURE PD CREW MEMBERS RESCUED REPORT LOSS OF  
RIGHT AIRERON AND VIOLENT SHIMMY IN MID-AIR PD

K. TO BE TURNED OVER TO DEPOT FOR PROBABLE SURVEY PD

L. NONE M. AFACG NOTIFIED

N. NOT AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME PD RECORDS OF GROUP IN TRANSIT TO NEW BASE  
PD LINE CHIEF REPORTS AIRCRAFT HAD NOT LOGED 50HRS AS YET BEST OF HIS  
KNOWLEDGE PD END

NR26/ES.

1832:12-43

INCOMING MESSAGE

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES  
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY  
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR ACTION A I U ✓  
FOR INFO DEC MGMT  
FOR FILE M & R

DATE 5 JANUARY 1944

X

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

ADM NET

MSF 48 ARL 234 5 JAN 44

FM FLYING SAFETY WASHINGTON DC

TO CHIEF FLYING SAFETY WINSTONSALEM, NC

BRIEF OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT NO 2491

- 44-133-8
- A 3 JANUARY 44 APPROXIMATELY 2300Z
  - B SIX MILES SOUTHWEST OF DELLE, UTAH
  - C 1ST LT HUGH B ASHBY
  - D 749 BOMB SQ, 457 BOMB GP, 2 AF, AAB, WENDOVER, UTAH
  - E SPIRALED AND CRASHED INTO MOUNTAIN
  - F PROBABLE MATERIEL FAILURE
  - G PILOT, COPILOT, MARVIN J BIBLE, NAVIGATOR, 2ND LT CLARENCE R MCRAE, BOMBARDIER, 2ND LT JOHN W NEWMAN, ENGINEER, T/SGT JOSEPH BARSOZA, TAIL GUNNER, SGT ROBERT A TIMMONS - ALL FATAL. PASSENGER, 2ND LT FRANK A HUNTLY MAJOR INJURIES, ASST ENGINEER, S/SGT BYRON F COOK JR ASST RADIO OPERATOR, T/SGT NEIL D BUCK RADIO OPERATOR, T/SGT EARNEST E HUNT, ARMOR GUNNER, S/SGT JUNIOR L KLAHS MINOR INJURIES
  - H CROSS COUNTRY FLIGHT TO GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA
  - I CEILING AT WENDOVER ESTIMATED 6000 FEET, OVERCAST, VISIBILITY 7 MILES TO 10 MILES, SURFACE WIND NORTHWESTERLY 6 TO 12 MILES PER HOUR CEILING AT SALT LAKE 700 TO 800 FEET OVERCAST VISIBILITY RESTRICTED TO 3/4

INCOMING MESSAGE

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES

FOR ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY

FOR INFO \_\_\_\_\_

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR FILE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

ADM NET

PAGE TWO

TO 1 MILES IN LIGHT SNOW, SURFACE WIND NORTHERLY 5 TO 8 MPH

J B-17C /42-31547/ 457 BOMB GP, 2 AF, AAB, WENDOVER, UTAH

K PROBABLE COMPLETE WRECK

L

M CREW MEMBERS RESCUED, REPORT LOSS OF RIGHT AILERON AND VIOLENT

SHIMMY IN MID-AIR AIRCRAFT WENT INTO STEEP SPIRAL AND CRASHED INTO  
MOUNTAIN

N TELETYPE

PRICE

SENT AT 2006Z DEW

#154/2009Z/DLL

I N C O M I N G M E S S A G E

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES FOR ACTION A I U  
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY FOR INFO O M  
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA FOR FILE M & R

DATE 11 JAN 44

T.W.X.  TELEGRAM  ADM NET

MSG 2 ARL 234 11 JAN 44

FM FLYING SAFETY WASHINGTON D C

TO CHIEF FLYING SAFETY WINSTONSALEM N C

BRIEF OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT NO 2647 REF NO 2491

- A 3 JANUARY 44 - APPROX 2300Z
- B SIX MILES SOUTHWEST OF DELLE, UTAH
- C 1ST LT HUGH B ASHBY
- D 742 BOMB SQ, 457 BOMB GP, 2 AF, AAB, WENDOVER, UTAH
- E SPIEALED AND BRASHED INTO MOUNTAIN
- F PROBABLE MATERIEL FIALURE
- G PILOT, ~~WACO~~-PILOT MARVIN J BIBLE, NAVIGATOR 2ND LT CLARENCE R MCRAE, BOMBARDIER 2ND LT JOHN W NEWMAN, ENGINEER T/SGT JOSEPH BARSOZA, TAIL GUNNER S/SGT ROBERT A TIMMONS - FATAL. PASSENGER 2ND LT FRANK A HUNTLY - MAJOR INJURIES. ASST ENGINEER S/SGT BYRON F COOK, JR ASST RADIO OPERATOR T/SGT NEIL D BUCK, RADIO OPERATOR T/SGT EARNEST E HUNG, ARMOR GUNER S/SGT JUNIO L KLAHS - MINOR INJURIES/
- H CROSS COUNTRY FLIGHT TO GRAND ISLAND, NEBR.
- I CEILING AT WENDOVER ESTIMATED 6000 FT, OVERCAST, VISIBILITY 7 MILES TO 10 MILES, SURFACE WIND NORTHWESTERLY 6 TO 12 MPH. CEILING AT SALT LAKE 700 TO 800 FT OVERCAST VISIBILITM RESTRICTED TO 3/4 TO 1 MILE IN LIGHT SNOW, SURFACE WIND NORTHERLY 5 TO 8 MPH.
- J B-17C 42-31547 457 BOMB GP, 2 AF, AAB , WENDOVER, UTAH
- K COMPLETE WRECK, BURNED

1-3-8  
53



INCOMING MESSAGE

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES

FOR ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY

FOR INFO \_\_\_\_\_

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR FILE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

ADM NET

PAGE 2

L

M CREW MEMBERS RESCUED REPORTED LOSS OF RIGHT AILERON AND VIOLENT SHIMMY IN MID-AIR. PLANE HIT SIDE OF MOUNTAIN AND EXPLODED, BURNING COMPLETELY. ENTIRE AREA SEARCHED BY AIRCRAFT. UNABLE TO IDENTIFY FATAL PERSONNEL ABOARD CRASHED AIRCRAFT AND THE POSSIBILITY OF ANY OF THEM PARACHUTING OR STILL BEING ALIVE IS DISCREDITED.

N TELETYPE

PRICE

SENT AT 1420 Z MH

#48/1425Z/BRR

183212-43

INCOMING MESSAGE

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES  
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY  
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR ACTION AIU  
FOR INFO OFC MGMT  
FOR FILE M&R

DATE 27 JAN 44

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

ADM NET

FROM ESTES FLYING SAFETY WASHINGTON DC 271959Z

TO CHIEF FLYING SAFETY WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

BRIEF OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT NO. 3185 REF NO. 2491 & 2647

A 3 JAN 44 APPROX 2300Z

C 1ST LT HUGH B ASHBY

D 742 BOMB SQ, 457 BOMB GP, 2 AF, AAB WENDOVER, UTAH

E SPIRALED AND CRASHED INTO MOUNTAIN

E PROBABLE MATERIEL FAILURE

F PILOT, CO-PILOT MARVIN J BIBLE, NAVIGATOR 2ND LT CLARENCE R MCRAE,

BOMBARDIER 2ND LT JOHN W NEWMAN, ENGINEER T/SGT JOSEPH BARSOZA,

TAIL GUNNER S/SGT ROBERT A TIMMONS-FATAL. PASSENGER 2ND LT FRANK

A HUNTLY-MAJOR INJURY, USED PARACHUTE. ASST ENGINEER S/SGT BYRON

F COOK, JR, ASST RADIO OPERATOR T/SGT NEIL D BUCK, RADIO OPERATOR

T/SGT EARNEST E HUNT, ARMORER GUNNER S/SGT JUNIOR L KLAHS

MINOR INJURY, USED PARACHUTE.

G CROSS COUNTRY FLIGHT TO GRAND ISLAND, NEBBASKA

H CEILING AT WENDOVER ESTIMATED 5000 FT., OVERCAST, VISIBILITY 7 MILES TO 10

MILES, SURFACE WIND NORTHWESTERLY 6 TO 12 MPH. CEILING AT SALT LAKE 700 TO

800 FT. OVERCAST, VISIBILITY RESTRICTED TO 3/4 TO 1 MILE IN LIGHT SNOW, S

SURFACE WIND NORTHERLY 5 TO 8 MPH

I B-17E REPEAT B-17C 42-31547 457 BOMB GP, 2 AF, AAB, WENDOVER, UTAH

J COMPLETE WRECK, BURNED

L

1-3-8

1030212-49

**I N C O M I N G M E S S A G E**

**HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES** FOR ACTION \_\_\_\_\_  
**OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY** FOR INFO \_\_\_\_\_  
**WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA** FOR FILE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

ADM NET

M CREW MEMBERS RESCUED REPORTED LOSS RIGHT AILERON AND VIOLENT  
SHIMMY IN MID-AIR. PLANE HIT SIDE OF MOUNTAIN AND EXPLODED, BURNING  
COMPLETELY.

N TELETYPE

2041Z

#109/RR/2045 Z

# RESTRICTED

BRIEF OF ACCIDENT REPORT  
SUBMITTED BY 1st LT. DAVID I. O'CONNOR, A. I. C.

DATE: 3 January 1944

TIME: 1600

LOCATION: 12 Miles South West of Belle, Utah

PILOT: 1st Lt. Hugh R. Ashby, Serial No. C-735499

AIRCRAFT: B-17G, #42-31547

HOME STATION: AAB, Wendover Field, Utah

ORGANIZATION: 15th Wing, 457th Bomb Op., 749th Bombardment Sq. (H), 2nd AF

RESULTS: Airplane: Completely demolished.

Crew: 11 aboard. 6 fatal. 5 minor injuries.

NARRATIVE: Subject aircraft took off at 1430 PST from Wendover Field, Wendover, Utah on an instrument clearance for Grand Island, Nebraska. This was a two fold mission, cross country training and movement of group to Grand Island, Nebraska. The aircraft circled the field until ATIS clearance was received and then proceeded on course, climbing into the overcast. As the ship proceeded into the overcast it stalled and fell off into a spin. The pilot recovered from spin in a very rough manner. He came out under the overcast. The pilot told the crew he thought that ice had caused the ship to stall. He then started through the overcast again and as the ship approached the top of the overcast, it stalled and went into a spin for the second time. The pilot recovered but in so doing, the right aileron tore off and struck the rear horizontal stabilizer. Five crew members bailed out and parachuted safely to the ground. The pilot and the remaining crew members remained with the ship which crashed into a mountainside and burned.

INVESTIGATION DISCLOSED: 1. 1st Lt. Hugh R. Ashby was a rated instrument check pilot and held a white instrument card.

2. Lt. Bentley, a first pilot himself but riding as a passenger on this trip, states that he was in the cockpit at the beginning of the flight and personally testified that the heaters and pitot heat were turned on before pilot ever entered overcast.

3. After recovery from the first spin, the radio operator, by interphone, asked the pilot what the trouble was, to which he says the pilot replied that he did not know but thought it was ice. The radio operator then looked at the leading edges of the tail surfaces and saw no ice. The pilot then stated he was going to try it again.

4. Just before second spin, radio operator heard navigator ask pilot on interphone to increase air speed.

5. Second spin occurred just as ship was beginning to break out at top of overcast, or at least was near enough to the top that passengers could see that they were going to break out soon.

6. Radio operator states that on a previous occasion in Texas while riding with this pilot, the ship stalled at an altitude above 20,000 feet, fell over in a dive, and recovered finally after a long fall.

# RESTRICTED