Accident No. 44-11-20-70

Checked by

Analysis by

Copied for Wright

Field by

Not. 8

Attention L. J. Boyce

Supervisor

1225-9-43
Accident No. 44-11-20-70

Pilot's Name: Smith, Harris J.

Nature Group: Stalls at high altitude, overflying.

Specific Nature: Undetermined

Underlying Nature: Undetermined

Cause Group: Undetermined

Specific Cause: Probable cause may be due to

Underlying Cause: Undetermined
WAR DEPARTMENT
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

ACCIDENT No. 411-20-70

Place: Army Air Base, Ephraim, Washington
Date: November 20, 1943
Time: 1940

AIRCRAFT: Type and model B-17G
A. P. No. 42-30161
Station: Ephraim, Washington
Organisation: 15th Wing, 2nd AF
457th Bomb Group 179th Bomb Squadron

PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>SERIAL NO.</th>
<th>BATTALION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Warren G.</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-765761</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuttie, Frank D.</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-765760</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hasley, John F.</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-764809</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong, David H.</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-764815</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riehl, Herbert H.</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-694690</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saltzer, David M.</td>
<td>2ndLt.</td>
<td>0-694729</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schauer, George F.</td>
<td>Sg t.</td>
<td>15510006</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapman, Benjamin F. Jr</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-39634936</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McAllister, Allen D.</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-37233147</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay, Claude W.</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-39261350</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rusnak, Joseph N.</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-37543122</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

Smith, Warren G.
2nd Lt.
2nd AF
O1
AC
2nd AF
Killed
No

Assigned (31) 2nd AF 457th Bomb Group 749th Bomb Squadron Ephraim, Washington
Attached for flying 15th Wing, 2nd AF 457th Bomb Group 179th Bomb Squadron Ephraim, Washington
Original rating (33) Pilot 5-20-43 Present rating (38) Pilot 5-20-43 Instrument rating (37) 11-11-43
First pilot hours
(35) This type
(36) This model
(37) Last 30 days
(41) Total
82105
35105
64145
82105
82105
82105
82105
82105
82105
82105
82105
82105
82105

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAMAGE</th>
<th>LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 5 5 5 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weather at the time of accident: Ceiling at 6000 to 6500 ft caused by a deck of stratus clouds; visibility unlimited (10 miles or better); WNW to NW at 5 to 7 miles per hour; no precipitation.

Was the pilot flying instruments at the time of accident? Yes

Contact:

Boise, Idaho
Ephraim, Washington

Pilot's mission: Returning from cross country trip (Harvard, Nebraska to Ephraim, Washington), stopped on leg at Boise, Idaho.

Nature of accident: Airplane stalled after the lowering of the gear. The pilot failed to retain control of the airplane. The airplane stalled several times, then spun or spiraled to the ground.

Cause of accident: The Board is unable to determine whether or not mechanical or structural failure entered into the initial loss of control. However, it is believed that the failure on the part of the pilot to regain control at a sufficient altitude was the direct cause of the accident. Outside of the statement of one witness, no indication of material failure is presented.
DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

The aircraft approached Ephrata apparently under complete control with no indication to survivors that anything was wrong with the aircraft. The pilot apparently oriented himself and lowered the landing gear and was descending along the N/S leg of Ephrata beam. During descent, control of the airplane was lost. On indication of loss of control, members of the crew in the waist and radio compartments donned parachutes and bailed out. One officer had a premature opening of chute resulting in his being thrown severely along the side of the fuselage and causing head injuries. He was freed by the last man to leave the airplane. It is believed that this officer's chute was fouled and torn by the stabilizer section of the airplane, and it became fouled around the officer in his parachute descent, causing his death.

The airplane crashed, disintegrated and burned in a comparatively small area. Indications are that the airplane crashed out of a spiral, spin, or turn to the left. From the setting of the control tabs, it is believed that the pilot was attempting to recover from a stalled left spiral. One body was found with safety belt fastened. Hence, it is believed that the pilots were attempting to regain control of the airplane during the entire time.

Personnel who bailed out reported the aircraft in a spin to the left and apparently undergoing several stalls.

RESPONSIBILITY: Poor pilot technique with possibility of material failure undetermined.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Initial instruction on these airplanes should include stalls and recovery from same with full and complete description of characteristics of this airplane in recovery from stalls, spins, and spirals with landing gear down.

Stricter adherence to first pilot flying instruments and the second pilot maintaining contact when performing night flying.

Stricter adherence to the wearing of parachutes.

STANLEY M. PETERS, Lt. Col.
Base Commander

HUGH D. WALLACE, Lt. Col.
Group Commander

GORDON H. MAHAID, Major
Gp. Flight Surgeon

JOHN S. CHALFANT, Captain
Group Operations Officer

CHARLES F. NELSON, Captain
Group S-2 Officer

HARRY E. LAWRENCE, Captain
Group Engineer Officer

JOHN H. GLOVACKI, 1st Lt.
Base Tech Inspector

Date __________________________

Signature _______________________

(Investigating Officer)
**WAR DEPARTMENT**

**U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES**

**REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT**

**RESTRICTED**

**Place**: Army Air Base, Ephraim, Washington

**Date**: November 20, 1943

**Time**: 1940

**AIRCRAFT**:
- (4) Type and model: B-17F
- (5) A.F. No.: 42-30429
- (6) Station: Ephraim, Washington

**Organization**:
- (7) 12th Wing, 2nd AF
- (8) 457th Bomb Group
- (9) 749th Bomb Group

---

**PERSONNEL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Air Force on Command</th>
<th>Result to Personel</th>
<th>Use of Parameters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuttle, Frank D.</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-756360</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>AC</td>
<td>2nd AF</td>
<td>Killed</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Air Force on Command</th>
<th>Result to Personel</th>
<th>Use of Parameters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuttle, Frank D.</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>0-756360</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>AC</td>
<td>2nd AF</td>
<td>Killed</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIRST PILOT HOURS**:

| (36) This type   | 00:10:00 | (43) Instrument time last 6 months | 1,425 |
| (37) This model  | 00:10:00 | (43) Instrument time last 30 days  | 00:100 |
| (38) Last 90 days| 00:10:00 | (44) Night time last 6 months     | 22:15  |
| (39) Total       | 00:10:00 | (44) Night time last 30 days      | 00:100 |

**AIRCRAFT DAMAGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(46) Aircraft</th>
<th>(47) Engine(s)</th>
<th>(48) Propeller(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

---

**Weather at the time of accident**

---

**Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident**

---

**Kind of clearance**

---

**Pilot's mission**

---

**Nature of accident**

---

**Cause of accident**

---

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

ACIDENT NO. 1

Place: Army Air Base, Ephrata, Washington.
Date: November 20, 1943.
Time: 1340.

AIRCRAFT: (2) Type and model: B-17F.
A.F. No.: 42-30183.
Station: Ephrata, Washington.
Organization: 15th Wing, 2nd AF, 97th Bomb Group, 7th Bomb Squadron.

PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DUTY</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>SERIAL NO.</th>
<th>BIRTH</th>
<th>TATTOO</th>
<th>PERSONNEL CLASS</th>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>AIR FORCE OR COMMAND</th>
<th>RESULT TO PERSONNEL</th>
<th>USE OF PERSONNEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Hasselbeck, John B.</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>0-74-809</td>
<td>2nd Lt.</td>
<td>AC</td>
<td>2nd AF</td>
<td>Killed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PILOT CHANGED WITH ACCIDENT

Hasselbeck, John B.
(First name) (Last name)
(First line)
(Middle initial)
(Company and Air Force)
(Designation)
(Assignment)

PILOT: 6-22, j-3
Present rating: 6-22, j-3
Instrument rating: 10-16, j-3

First Pilot Hours:
(At the time of this accident)
(38) Total: 120.00 h
(39) This type: 120.00 h
(40) This model: 120.00 h
(41) Total: 120.00 h

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAMAGE</th>
<th>LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Weather at the time of accident:
Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident:
Clared from:
To:
Kind of clearance:
Pilot's mission:
Nature of accident:
Cause of accident:

REstricted
## Report of Aircraft Accident

**Place:** Army Air Base, Ephrata, Washington  
**Date:** November 20, 1943  
**Time:** 1940

### Aircraft Information
- **Type and Model:** B-17F
- **A/F No.:** 42-30483
- **Station:** Ephrata, Washington
- **Organization:** 15th Wing, 2nd AF, 457th Bomb Group, 749th Bomb Squadron

### Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INT</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>RATING</th>
<th>SERIAL NO.</th>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>PERSONNEL CLASS</th>
<th>BRANCH</th>
<th>AIR FORCE COMMAND</th>
<th>EFFECT ON PERSONNEL</th>
<th>USE OF PERSONNEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>ARMSTRONG, DAVID A P</td>
<td>0-7488316</td>
<td>2nd Lt</td>
<td>OL</td>
<td>AC</td>
<td>2nd AF</td>
<td>Killed</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(20) ARMSTRONG</th>
<th>DAVID (Last name)</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>0-7488316</th>
<th>(22) 2nd Lt</th>
<th>(23) OL</th>
<th>(24) AC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Assigned:** 2nd AF  
**Attached for flying:** 15th Wing, 2nd AF  
**Original rating:** 2nd Lt  
**Present rating:** 2nd Lt  
**Instrument rating:** (Data)

### First Pilot Hours:

- **(38) This type:** 5:00  
- **(39) This model:** 5:00  
- **(40) Last 90 days:** 8:30  
- **(41) Total:** 6:00

### Aircraft Damage

- **(44) Aircraft:**  
- **(47) Engine(s):**  
- **(48) Propeller(s):**

### Weather at the time of accident

- **(54) Kind of clearance:**

### Cause of accident

- **(57) What was the pilot doing at the time of the accident:**
- **(58) Nature of accident:**
- **(59) Cause of accident:**
HEADQUARTERS
457TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

AAB, Ephrata, Wash.
23 November 1943

STATEMENT

Lt. W. G. Smith in airplane No. 42-30483, was on my wing from Boise to Pendleton. Soon after leaving Pendleton, I could not see him. I made several half circles trying to pick him up. The weather was clear above the fog bank covering Pendleton and Walla Walla. I heard 42-30483 calling Pendleton asking for the ceiling at Ephrata. Again I looked around for him but could not find him. I went on to Ephrata being in the clear at 9000 feet; then the clouds below became broken and I could see Moses Lake and Ephrata, so I lowered my wheels and flaps and descended and landed. When on the ground about 1925 to 1930, I definitely heard 42-30483 calling so that I am certain that he knew his location. Stars were invisible when I taxied to the line after landing at 1916.

Jack A. Mendell
Major, Air Corps,
Air Inspector.
21 November 1943

NAME: Chapman, Benjamin, Sgt.,

SERIAL NO. 38364896

CLASSIFICATION: Assistant Radio Operator

DATE OF ACCIDENT: 20 November 1943, 1940 PWT

It was between 1935 and 2000 when the accident occurred. The last report that I received from the pilot was that we were at about 10,000 ft., and we could remove our oxygen masks. It wasn’t long after that that we started to lose altitude. The engineer came back, and we asked him if we were going in for a landing, and he said "Yes". The engineer got the hand crank and started back toward the tail of the ship. Just then a terrible vibration started up, and it knocked him off his feet. I saw him scramble toward the tail. The plane started to do all kinds of things - rolls, a spin or two, and etc. Before this when the engineer came back to see if the wheels were down, I didn't know whether they were or not, but I believe they were. When the vibrations occurred, we thought the ship was going to go to pieces. When I was in the radio room, I heard that they were trying to get the emergency door open as it was stuck. The other boys from the radio room, and the waist compartment went back before I did to get their chutes on. When the bell started to ring, I put my chute on as fast as I could. They were working with the emergency escape hatch, and finally had to kick it out.

I was the third man to bail out. All four engines were going strong when I left, but it seemed to have lost control and was losing altitude. The pilot was trying to get the ship back up again. It made a couple of dives and came rather close to the ground a few times.

When we were in Boise, the pilot told me to put the eleven parachutes on board the plane, and in doing so, I found that the nose hatch did not have a handle on the inside. Someone on the outside had to close it.

I certify that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sgt. Benjamin T. Chapman

RESTRICTED
NAME: WAXLER, Allen D., Sgt.
SERIAL NO.: 37232147
CLASSIFICATION: Engineer
DATE OF ACCIDENT: 20 November 1943, 1940 FWT

I held position of Engineer, but the other crew was in charge at the time of the accident. I believe that it was either caused by extreme icing or runaway engines. I really believe that the engine jumped out of the mount. We had had about 1600-1700 gallons of fuel aboard the ship. The plane had been thoroughly checked before we left Boise. However, there was a very heavy overcast and aleet from what I could see from the waist window. I really think it was a runaway engine, as the ship shook and vibrated so badly. It was shaking so furiously that we could hardly put on our parachutes. I believe that the accident occurred at or about eight o'clock. The alarm bell was ringing, and we did not receive any orders to bail out.

I thought that we had better bail out when the ship started into a spin. We had quite a bit of trouble getting the door open and finally had to kick it open. I went out head first and just after I bailed out, the plane nearly ran into me. I knocked some of the edgings off of my teeth when the parachute buckle struck my mouth. I was the second man to bail out. When the plane exploded, it lit up the entire section, and I could see the other men coming down and could see where I was going to land.

I landed about 1/2 miles from the place of the crash, and managed to get to the road where I was picked up by a passing car and taken to the scene of the crash. It was there that I met the other boys who survived the accident. I got sick. I could not look around anymore, and did not recognize them or help them in any way. I thought that I recognized Lieut. Smith by a sweater that clothed a body on the ground.

I certify that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Allen D. Waxler
21 November 1943

NAME: CLAY, Claudia, Sgt.

SERIAL NO.: 39261530

CLASSIFICATION: Armorer Gunner

DATE OF ACCIDENT: 20 November 1943, 1940 PWT

The approximate time that everything started was about 1945. I
was in the radio room. I went forward to see the Navigator to see if
we were doing all right. He said that we were circling the Ephrata
Field. I went back to the radio room with the rest of the men, and
just then the ship went into some violent maneuvers. All we could do
was sit on the floor as we could not move. At the same time, the alarm
bell went off, and we went back to put on our chutes. My chute was right
by the door, so I put it on, but I had it on backwards, and took it off
to replace it correctly. By that time there was only one left. I could
not buckle my leg straps. One man, his name was Lieut. Armstrong, ac-
cidentally pulled his ripcord, and the chute went out, and it bumped him
against the back of the door. His face was covered with blood, but he
was still conscious. I went over to help him, but he was sliding out.
That was the last time I saw him. After that the plane went into a
dive, and I jumped out. I could hear the engines roaring very loudly.

As I jumped, I saw the plane go down and then a big explosion oc-
curred. I landed about 150 yards from the plane in a plowed field.
It just seemed to have taken several seconds before I hit the ground.
I tried to get out of the harness, and found that the buckle was be-
hind my neck. I walked over toward the burning ship. I could not get
close to the fire, as I had lost my shoes. One of my shoes was blown
off, and I had lost the other when I bailed out.

I certify that the above statements are true to the best of my
knowledge and belief.

Claudia W. Clay
I was radio-man on Lieut. Haselbeck's crew, but we had changed over in Boise, and Lieut. Smith took over. While we were in Boise, I was checking over the ship, and noticed a cracked vane in the supercharger. I was moving them around, and found that it was split completely in two. Lieut. Armstrong said that as long as it was in position, there was nothing to worry about. The oil was spilling all over. We had plenty of fuel, as we took on 900 gallons at Boise.

About 7:30 p.m., the pilot called up and wanted the radio-man to contact Ephrata Tower, but said to wait until he called us. I asked the pilot about the frequency, as I didn't know whether it was 6210 or not. I had 6210 on the liaison, but he wanted us on the command set not liaison. The navigator gave us a reading in latitude and longitude—46°45' and 119° or more, and that we would be landing in about fifteen minutes. We were following Major Hendell in from Pendleton. I was in contact with the Major, but the pilot was getting excited and kept cutting me out and asking to call on the blinker. The radio man kept transmitting on liaison frequency. He wanted his radio operator to give up, but did not ask us to send it on liaison. He wanted us to send a blinker message. After that we lost the Major. We went to about 10,000 ft. after that. I asked the engineer what was going on, and he said that we were landing, and noticed that the light came on indicating that the wheels were down. About that time we received a terrible bump, and thought we must be landing, but then the ship went crazy. No one told us to jump, but I went back and put on my parachute. I was excited. I didn't know what was wrong, but I was getting out. The ship was shaking so that I had a difficult time in putting on my parachute. The radio-man said that the alarm bell was ringing, but that we were so far up we did not have to bail out as yet. There was something wrong with the emergency release, as we could not open the door, so we pushed and kicked at it until it finally opened. Just then the ship vibrated horribly, and I told him to get out of the way, as I was going to jump. I jumped out on my own accord.

I was the first to jump. Lt. Salties was in the waist of the ship. I do not know what happened to him. Apparently, his chute was in the nose of the ship and he went forward to get it. It is really hard to put on a parachute in a maneuvering plane. While I was coming down, I could see the ship. It was acting crazily, and doing lazy 8's, and came within 100 ft. of me. I tried to pull at my parachute to turn in a circle, but I couldn't as I did not know how to spill a parachute. About ten minutes before I jumped, I had noticed a heavy overcast, but when my chute popped, it was fairly clear. When the ship crashed, it lit up the entire countryside. When I hit the ground, my head snapped forward on my knees, and the base of my spine hit the ground. I landed a couple of miles from the crash, and then took off my chute and started in the direction of the accident. I ran for
about fifteen minutes and then quit. I must have walked for about ten to fifteen minutes before a passing car picked me up and drove to the place where the plane crashed.

I certify that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

A True Copy

Capt., A.C.
23 November 1943

WAXLER, Allen D., Sgt.
37232147

RESTRICTED

Riding as a passenger. Held crew position of Engineer.

Q. In your testimony, you state that you saw sleet from the waist window. Is that correct?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. You have been in automobiles when the windows fogged up?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was it similar to that and could you actually tell whether it was warmer on the inside of the ship than on the outside thus causing the windows to steam?
A. Yes, sir, it was. Still I could see it from the window. It didn't last very long. We just passed through it.

Q. Could it have been a vapor trail from the prop tips?
A. No, sir.

Q. Could you see up above you? Could you see the stars? Could you see lights below you?
A. Yes, sir. Just in and out. I saw the stars through the clouds. I could see lights on the ground. That must have been six or eight minutes before the plane started jumping.

Q. Do you remember looking at the ground after leaving Boise?
A. Yes, sir, it was pretty clear for quite a ways. There was still an overcast.

Q. Were you in the clear all of the time?
A. No, sir.

Q. Was it after you lost the Major's ship or before?
A. Before.

Q. Do you remember whether or not you passed Pendleton?
A. Yes, sir, we passed Pendleton. It was overcast, but we could see the field.

Q. You mentioned that the ship was vibrating and shaking very badly and that the alarm bell was ringing sometime during that period. About what was the relation between the two; in other words, did the ship vibrate and the alarm
bell ring at the same time?

A. It vibrated at least two times before the alarm bell rang. I did not hear the alarm bell myself. I heard someone else say that the bell rang.

Q. Could you see up the front through the bomb bay after the ship started to vibrate?

A. No, sir. I did just before I jumped. The assistant engineer was lying on the floor on his stomach.

Q. You don’t know if the doors were open into the cockpit?

A. The engineer had just come back through the plane....

Q. Did you see anything up in the cockpit?

A. No, sir.

Q. Do you know whether there was a light or not?

A. No, sir.

Q. Was this vibration that you mentioned a continuous one, or did it vibrate and then stop, vibrate and stop?

A. It would vibrate and then stop, and sounded like a fitfull stall.

Q. Did you feel a funny sensation like stalling?

A. It was stalling, I know.

Q. Have you ever been in a stalled B-17?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You know the feeling you get—how it shakes when it falls?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was there any vibration at any other time except at the end of the climbing or when the ship was diving?

A. It was all at the end of the climbing. It was not a continuous vibration.

Q. You stated that when the plane exploded, you could see where you were going to land.

A. Yes, sir.

Q. About in what position did it look like the men were coming down?

A. See attached drawing.
Q. In other words, the position you were in was in the formation of a circle or oval when you hit the ground?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Would you give us in your own words what you heard over the interphone just shortly prior to the vibration?
A. The pilot called up and asked if everybody was all right. The radio man said "Yes". The pilot said that it was all right to take off our oxygen masks as we were at 10,000 ft. Shortly after that he called the radio man and said "When I give you the word, you get the position report from the Ephraim Tower". Then I believe the radio man called the Navigator, and I heard the Navigator saying it was so many degrees and giving a report. Then I heard him say he was letting down to 2,500 ft. That was all the conversation.
Q. After he said he was going to let down, about how much later did the vibration start?
A. I do not know just how long, but it was a short time thereafter.
Q. Did you happen to look out of the window? Did he start to let his landing gear down?
A. I don't know.
Q. You mentioned "It was shaking so furiously, we could hardly put on our parachutes." Was it between these intermittent vibrations that you could put on your chutes?
A. We were trying to get them on all of the time, but when it went into a climb, it was pretty hard as it would hold us down on the floor.
Q. Were you held against the sides of the ship?
A. I wasn't.
Q. But you were held against the floor of the ship?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Do you know if the pilot was using automatic flight control?
A. No, sir, I don't believe so.
Q. Any particular reasons why you don't believe he was using it?
A. It seems that he might have said something to the Navigator if he had been.
Q. Was it the way in which the ship flew while you were going up that made you believe the pilot was flying it himself?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. You know the little rolling feeling sometimes present with APCE?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was there anything wrong with the emergency escape hatches up in front that you would know of?
A. No, sir.

Q. You mentioned about removing your oxygen masks; was this before or after you reached Pendleton?
A. Before we got to Pendleton.

Q. Did he give altitude above 10,000 ft?
A. I believe he said we were at 5,000 ft. at sometime, but I don't know how much higher.

Q. Had there ever been a bank or turn at any time? Did the pilot make an attempt to turn around or to make a bank?
A. I believe he was making a turn. He had already passed over and was making an attempt to come back.

Q. He made one or two banks, but outside of that the airplane was functioning perfectly?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. Could you ever tell if the pilot was watching the instrument panel or looking over his shoulder?
A. No, sir. I could not tell what was going on.

NOTE: Sgt. Waxler was in the waist of the ship the entire trip from Boise.

Q. During the trip, did you know of any difficulty up in the cockpit between the pilots. Did one pilot criticize the other pilot?
A. No, sir.

Q. They were getting along all right?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did the co-pilot fly in the co-pilot's seat?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Had anybody started to move around in the airplane about the time you noticed the vibration? Had anybody moved to the rear of the airplane at the time of the vibration?
A. There were only four men in the back end.
Q. Did you have any bombs aboard?
A. No, sir.
Q. Did you feel a sideways slipping as though something was holding hard at the right rudder?
A. No, sir.

CHAPMAN, Benjamin, Sgt., 38368496

Was radio operator of the airplane.
Q. The vibration that you mentioned, was it a long continuous vibrating or intermittent; i.e., would it vibrate and then stop, vibrate and stop?
A. It was quite a long time between vibrations. It would wait and then vibrate.
Q. In the interval, between vibrations, did you feel that you were being pressed against the floor or the sides of the ship?
A. I was pressed against the floor. It never did pitch us off the floor.
Q. Did it feel light on the floor?
A. At times it did then other times, it just glued us to the floor.
Q. That was between the vibrations?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Could you tell whether the engines would smooth out between the vibrations?
A. No, sir, they felt as if they were going full throttle. All four engines sounded bad. They were going full throttle.
Q. Did you happen to glance up between the bomb bay at any time?
A. The door was closed. As soon as the vibration set up, he started to ring the bell. I grabbed my chute. I was in the radio room. After the vibration, the bell rang continuously.
Q. Had you been standing by on command or interphone?

A. Interphone, not command.

Q. You don't know if he was trying to contact Ephraim tower?

A. No sir.

Q. Do you think that all of the engines were running pretty good? Also when they were running full throttle?

A. I feel sure that none of the engines were out; they were all going full Throttle.

Q. Did you hear one big roar immediately before it hit?

A. Only when it nosed down it made a loud roar.

Q. Did you see any of the other parachuting crew coming down when the ship exploded?

A. The ship lit up the whole countryside, but I could see no one.

Q. You were No. 3 man?

A. I was No. 3 man. I was more interested in watching the fire than anything else.

Q. Did any of these people start to climb to the rear of the airplane?

A. Yes, sir. Five of us climbed in the rear of the plane. They had just kicked the hatch out when I got back there. Husiako, Wacker and myself.

Q. Did it look as if the nose hatch handle had been broken off?

A. I was there when the pilot came up to put the parachutes in the ship. He was trying to close the door himself from the inside, but someone from the outside had to close it. He never did close it from the inside.

Q. Did Armstrong get in the back?

A. Yes sir. He went back. Lt. Salties was staying in the back.

Q. Were six of you riding in the rear of the plane?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Lt. Smith had told you something about your chutes?

A. Yes, sir. He said "I want all the members of my crew to have their chutes beside them even if you have to sit on them."
Q. Had the pilot started to put down his landing gear?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you definitely know when the landing gear went down?
A. No, sir, but the red light came on. Rusanko called my attention to it.

Q. About what altitude were you when he called your attention to the landing gear?
A. I don't know, but it was before the vibration started.

Q. Could you give us the conversation on the interphone communication?
A. The navigator and pilot were talking back and forth. I do not think they said very much. The pilot called back to me to take off my oxygen mask. That was quite a few minutes after he gave a position report.

Q. Did he say anything about altitude?
A. He said we were at 10,000 ft.

Q. Did he say anything about letting down?
A. I didn't hear anything. If there was any trouble going on, the pilot didn't say anything about it. Only, I asked how long it would be before we got there, and the pilot said "We are circling the field now."

Q. How long was that — that you knew you were at 10,000 ft?
A. About the same time. The whole thing happened pretty quickly. The engineer had gone up twice and the last time he came back, he told us that we were circling the field for a landing. I saw lights on the ground at that time. We went on passed them, and then I didn't see them again.

Q. That was before the vibration started?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did Lt. Armstrong try to jump before you did?
A. No, sir. He was up toward the front from us. We were right by the escape hatch. He kept telling us to leave. It seems like each one dove out. When I got up he told me to leave. He seemed rather scared. I supposed he realized more what was happening than we did, in all probability.
Riding as a passenger.

Q. When you went forward to talk to the Navigator, was the cockpit light on?
A. Just the instrument panel.

Q. Did you look out of the side of the ship when you went forward?
A. No sir.

Q. Did you go up into the nose?
A. Yes, sir. Right into the nose behind the Navigator.

Q. Who was in the nose at that time?
A. Lt. Rubenstein and Haselbeck. Lt. Armstrong was in the Radio Room. I think it was Lt. Salties who was in the waist compartment. There was just two men in the nose.

Q. When you went forward and passed through the pilot's compartment was there any indication of anything wrong with the pilots? Did they seem worried or did they act if something was out of the ordinary?
A. I could only see their backs and could not tell if they were rattled. The engineer was in the pilot's compartment.

Q. In other words from all indications everything was all right at that time?
A. Yes, sir. We did know that we were circling Ephrata in wide circles.

Q. At any time did you look out of the windows of the ship?
A. No, sir. I may have looked out before that, but I cannot definitely recall.

Q. You said that the ship went into some violent maneuvers?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did the engineer in going through the radio compartment say or do anything?
A. When I came back from the Navigator, we both went back together. The other fellows had heard him saying that he was going to put the wheels down. The others said they heard it at the time, but I didn't know why he came back.

Q. Do you recall if he went back to pick up the crank?
A. I don't think he went passed the door as just about that time, the maneuvers started. Somebody said to get down on the floor, so I could not see.

Q. Do you know who said that?
A. I had started back towards the waist, and somebody said "Sit down".
Q. Did anyone say what was happening? Did you overhear anything?
A. No, sir.
Q. Did you hear the alarm bell going off?
A. Yes, sir. Just as soon as the maneuvers started; with a steady ring. As far as I can remember, it was ringing until I left.
Q. However, it made the maneuvers first? How did it feel as far as you were concerned? Were you pressed against the sides of the ship or lifted in the air?
A. It started to bank a little, and we were pressed against the walls.
Q. Did you ever feel as if you were lifted from the floor or light on the floor?
A. Yes, sir. At times it didn't, but other times it seemed as if it was.
Q. Were you ever in an airplane when they were demonstrating stalls?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Was it something like that?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. was the vibration a continuous one or did it vibrate and then stop, vibrate and stop?
A. It would vibrate and stop. The motors were whining.
Q. When the motors were whining, how was your feeling in relation to the floor?
A. I don't recall.
Q. Do you have any ideas or opinions as to what might have happened?
A. I went forward twice. The last time to see the Navigator. I took him a candy bar, went back, and then went forward and asked him what altitude it was, and saw the altimeter was dropping down.
Q. Did you notice what the altimeter was?
A. I thought it had said 1200, it might have been 12,000. It was hard to read.
Q. When you took the candy bar forward was that before or after the Lieut. told you to take your masks off?
A. That was after he told us.
Q. Just a short time after?
A. Yes, sir. When I came back, the boys mentioned about our being lost. I hardly even stopped in the radio compartment. I took the candy bar forward, went back, and then went forward to talk to the Navigator.

Q. Did you think you were lost?
A. He said we were circling Ephrata. I think we might have been a little bit off. Wilson Creek is twenty to thirty miles South Ephrata.

Q. Do you recall how it felt when you were falling?
A. I did not understand much about it then.

Q. Do you know whether Lt. Armstrong accidentally pulled the chute which threw him against the door?
A. I know the chute went out but it snapped him back. He was standing still, and the chute went out.

Q. Was he standing the doorway?
A. Yes, he was standing in the doorway with his back toward the side of the ship.

Q. Was he in a position to bump into something that would have pulled the ripcord?
A. I really don't know.

Q. What kind of chute did he have on?
A. Chest Chute. As soon as the chute went out, it slammed him up against the door-jamb and the bottom of the door, between the floor and the side of the door. The rest of his body was out of the ship. It threw his head up against the jamb between the rear section of the door and the floor; back towards the tail of the ship. All of his chute was outside. It just seemed like he was held there tightly. I was just about to get my hands on him to pull him back in, but he slid out.

Q. Could you see whether or not his chute was on the vertical fin?
A. No, sir. He was whipped back out of view; down and out of sight.

Q. You went right out then?
A. Yes, in less than a minute.

Q. How were the engines sounding all during this period?
A. It just sounded loud, like putting on full power.

Q. You say all the engines were going?
A. It sounded like all engines were going.
Q. When it would vibrate, did you hear a thumping noise? Could it have been the trailing wire from the antenna?
A. It might have been something hitting against the ship.

Q. How was the weather at the time all this happened? Could you see lights on the ground or stars in the sky?
A. It seems that the stars were out when I landed. Several times in the radio room, we could look up and see the stars. We came through a mist on the way over here.

Q. Do you recall having looked out at any time when they started to circle what they called Ephrata?
A. No, sir, I never saw any lights.

Q. Do you recall looking out?
A. I looked out once when I was in the radio room, but after the alarm bell started to ring, I never looked out.

Q. How high do you estimate you were when you left the airplane?
A. Maybe 600' or 500'.

Q. Did you see the plane crash?
A. When I saw it, I didn't know it was a plane. I saw a flame going down into the ground. I could not distinguish any part of the airplane.

Q. The airplane was descending pretty fast when you left it.
A. Yes, sir.
I never did get my parachute on right.

Q. When you pulled your ripcord, did you hold your arms out?
A. No, sir.

Q. Did you get any violent shoulder jerks?
A. No, sir. The only sore part was around my neck.

Q. Was there any indication of fire on the ship?
A. No, sir. No smoke or any fire that I could see.
Was riding as passenger.

Q. Had your crew been flying this ship up until the time it reached Boise?
A. Yes, sir. We flew from Harvard to Boise. Then Lt. Smith's crew took over.

Q. Had you had any trouble with the ship prior to arriving in Boise?
A. No, sir. It ran all right. We had a little radio trouble; the command set would not work, and we had a new transmitter put in in Boise.

Q. What do you mean when you say "The oil was spilling all over"?
A. There was a lot of oil that was running over the wing from the No. 2 engine.

Q. On what engine was this cracked vane?
A. No. 2 engine.

Q. Was there anything wrong with the No. 2 engine on the way up to Boise?
A. No, sir.

Q. What did the pilot say about contacting the Ephrata Tower?
A. The pilot said to wait until he called us. We called the Navigator and he gave us a position report of latitude and longitude. The only frequency that I remember as a radio operator to get contact to him was 6210 or 396. I had 6210 on the liaison, but he wanted us on the command set not liaison, in which case a tuning set would have to be set up in the front in the panel. He told us not to monkey with it.

Q. In other words you were going to change the tuning set over on the command set?
A. He didn't want that done. We could only get 6495 and 6210 on the command set. We had contacted Boise tower on both of them. Our radio check was all right.

Q. What happened then?
A. I was calling Major Mendell on 6210. The pilot was cutting me out. Chapman was really the operator, but he didn't know much about it, and I was giving him instructions and teaching him how to operate. I had contact with Major Mendell.

Q. You were calling Major Mendell?
A. I heard him come in a couple of times. I could hear 748 but before I could get the entire message, the pilot kept interrupting and I could not get it.
Q. Did Chapman ever get up to send that blinker message?

A. I don't know, sir.

Q. Do you remember the message?

A. The message was: "Please extinguish recognition light as light blinds the pilot."

Q. Was Major Hendell's plane in sight at that time?

A. Yes, sir, it was before Pendleton.

Q. Do you remember what happened after that?

A. I had been back in the waist to talk to the engineer on Lt. Haselbeck's crew. We were flying in an overcase, and at times you could not see the wing tips. It was solid white underneath. The ship started to turn and then straighten out, and then turn. I said to the engineer "I think the pilot is lost," I went up to the radio room. I figured we were lost. I hadn't been there five minutes when I noticed the red lights come on. I asked the engineer what was the matter. Just after that there was a terrific bump and the engines came on and we were glued to the floor. I ran back to the waist to get my parachute. The engineer asked me what the matter was, and I told him that I was getting out. At times we would get light on our feet, and then get crushed down on the floor. The door of the emergency hatch could not be opened.

Q. How was your altitude?

A. We had lots of altitude.

Q. Do you have any idea how long it took you to get to the ground?

A. Ten or twelve minutes.

Q. Could you tell us something of what happened to the ship while you were coming down?

A. After I left the ship, I saw it was going away from me. It went into a steep climb, and then went underneath me, and then went into another steep climb, and went all the way down. I watched it until it hit. The engines were going full blast.

Q. Did you see any lights when you were bailing out? You said he had plenty of altitude?

A. There were a few lights scattered around. We were quite a ways up when I jumped.
Q. Did you have your chute on?
A. No, sir.

Q. About how long after you received the first bump did it take you to put your chute on?
A. About one and a half minutes.

Q. Was there any vibration after the bump?
A. Yes, sir. Right after the bump the whole ship started to shake. The engines came on full blast.

Q. Did you hear the alarm bell?
A. No, sir.

Q. When did the engineer leave, do you know?
A. I don't know when he left, but he said he left right after I did. Chapman said the bell was ringing.

Q. Had that started before lowering the landing gear?
A. The landing gear was down or the light would never have gone on.

Q. When the plane came up over you, could you see whether or not the superchargers were red?
A. No, sir, I could not.

Q. Do you remember seeing Lt. Salties?
A. Lt. Salties was back in the waist compartment, but his chute was in the nose of the ship.

Q. Do you remember how many were in the tail of the airplane when you left?
A. I don't remember, but when I left the radio room, there was chapman, Lt. Armstrong and Clay and myself. Lt. Salties and Waxler were in the waist. I don't remember seeing Clay in the nose.

Q. Do you remember seeing any overcast?
A. I don't remember any clouds. The sky was clear when I landed.

Q. On these vibrations—how did they occur. Was it a continuous vibration or would it vibrate and then stop, vibrate and stop?
A. It was not a continuous vibration.

Q. How did you feel in the ship?
A. There were times when we were in steep climbs that we were on the floor, and other times, we were light on our feet.

Q. That all happened after the first bump?

A. They seemed to think that we hit a hill top. I don't see how that could have happened, because, we were way up when I jumped. The ship was burning at least five minutes before I hit. It felt as though we hit something. There was a direct bump, just like a bad landing.

Q. Did you think it was the landing gear coming down?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Did you have a trailing wire?

A. No, sir. The ship seemed to pull up in a steep climb and then fall for after I jumped, I watched it go into a very steep dive, and then it pulled up.

Q. You say that you were still up in the air quite sometime after the ship crashed?

A. Yes, sir, about five minutes.

Q. Did you see the plane hit the ground?

A. Yes, sir. After the plane hit the ground it burst into flames. I was pretty much up above it and cannot tell much about it.

Q. Did you see any more of the chutes open?

A. No, sir. I figures that when the plane hit that I was the only one who got out. I didn't see any other parachutes. I think there was plenty of time to get out. I think that if they had had their parachutes on, they could have gotten out.
Sketch of the scene of the accident is not considered necessary as the attached photographs clearly show the terrain at the scene of the accident.

JOE L. RITAN,
Captain, Air Corps,
Base Operations Officer
AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS  
Office of the Weather Officer  
Ephrata, Washington

26 November 1943

SUBJECT: WEATHER REPORT.

TO: OPERATIONS OFFICER, AAB Ephrata, Washington.

1. The following weather conditions prevailed at Ephrata, Washington and vicinity during the evening of 20 November 1943:

A five (5) thousand foot overcast at 1700 FWT slowly rising to six (6) thousand broken to overcast by 2000 FWT.

The visibility was unrestricted until early morning when fog reduced the visibility to 2-3 miles. At the time of the accident, the visibility was 10-15 miles.

The weather conditions along the entire route were: high broken clouds at 10 to 12 thousand, lower broken clouds at 5 to 6 thousand feet with the exception of one point along the route, Pendleton, Oregon, where a 10 to 12 hundred foot overcast existed and the visibility was restricted to 3 miles by fog. The rest of the route reported visibilities of 10 to 15 miles.

2. It is the belief of the undersigned that the conditions at Pendleton, Oregon was the only reason for the clearance being instrument rather than contact.

[Signature]

HORNETT J. GEEVHS
2ndLt, Air Corps
Acting Base Weather Officer

RESTRICTED
BASE WEATHER STATION
Gowen Field; Boise, Idaho

22 November 1943

SUBJECT: Report on Aircraft Accident 20 November 1943

TO: Aircraft Investigation Committee

1. Following are sequences taken from the observations at weather stations along route followed by aircraft on the evening of 20 November 1943. Observations for two hours preceding and one hour succeeding accident are given.

1930 PO C Z10B403F- 190/40/39 14 3/005
    WL X SPL M16512/2L-F- 183/41/40 25 5/004
    EP E606358 176/49/42 11 002/ SRKS

2015 WL SPL M263 3/4 R-F- 183/41/40 2 004

2030 PO C M12B40 D3F- 193/40/39 42 005
    WL X M266 3/4 R-F- 190/41/40 2 004
    EP M607060 183/69/42 7 004

2105 PO X SPL 202005P M568 3F- 193/40/39 3 005/M12P

2130 PO X M39D3P- 200/40/39 44/008/E128/307 5006
    WL X 00R-F4 198/41/41 3 006/500
    EP M608 186/49/42 6 005/310/709

2. Conditions at the time of the crash were essentially the same as the 2030 observation. All times stated are WMT.

ARTHUR J. LUCK
2nd Lt., Air Corps
Ass't Weather Officer

This is a certified true copy.

RAYMOND F. LYNCH
2nd Lt., Air Corps
Acting Base Weather Officer

RESTRICTED

TO: Commanding Officer, 457th Bombardment Group (Hv), Ephrata Army Air Base, Washington.

1. Weather conditions at Ephrata AAB and Moses Lake AAB at 1940 PST, 20 November 1943, were as follows: Ceiling at 6000 to 6500 feet caused by a deck of stratus clouds, visibility unlimited (10 miles or better), wind NNW to NWW 5 to 7 m.p.h., no precipitation.

2. From all indications the weather at Wilson Creek, approximately 30 miles northeast of Ephrata, was the same as that at Ephrata.

3. Hourly teletype reports for EF (Ephrata AAB) and EPN (Moses Lake AAB) for 1730, 1830, 1930, 2030 PST, and for FPN (Harrington) for 1830 PST are enclosed.

Charles D. Weber
2nd Lt., Air Corps
Staff Weather Officer

1 Inc– Hourly Teletype Sequences for EF, EPN, FPN (in quint)
CERTIFICATE

I certify that I have examined the following named officers and enlisted men prior to Air Craft accident of November 20, 1943, I further certify that I knew each man personally, that recreational and messing facilities were adequate, and further certify the pilots physical and neuro-psychic condition did not account for the accident and that there was no evidence of flying fatigue.

2nd Lt. Warren G. Smith 2nd Lt. David H. Armstrong
2nd Lt. Frank D. Tuttle 2nd Lt. David (NMI) Saltiel
2nd Lt. Herbert W. Rubinstein 2nd Lt. John B. Hazelbeck
Sgt. George F. Schauer 2nd Lt. Herbert W. Rubinstein
Sgt. Joseph (NMI) Rusinko 2nd Lt. John B. Hazelbeck
Sgt. Allen D. Waxler 2nd Lt. John B. Hazelbeck
Sgt. Claudis W. Clay

Richard D. Crow
Captain, M. O
Squadron Surgeon
SPECIAL ORDER

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON, WASHINGTON
21 November 1943

1. The following named EK, Med Rec ASFIC, this sta, having appeared before the Base Classification Board are reclassified under the provisions of 2AF Memo 35-7, as follows:

   T/4 ROBERT O. HEBBARD
   3740326               From 1157
   To 417

   T/5 CHARLES E. PAULSELL
   37405876              609
   673

2. For 11 90 312, this Hq, is amended as follows:

   TO REHEART: CPL (693) EDWIN M. CONRAD
   17037209 7/48th Bomb Sq, 457th Bomb Gp (H)
   (For EK to be to 53rd Repd Wing Det.)

3. An Acft Accident Committee consisting of the following named O is hereby constituted will meet at the call of the Senior Member:

   Lt. Col. STANLEY M. PERSONS 0105070 AC Base Commander
   Lt. Col. GORDON B. PALLAS 0213742 AC Op Commander
   Maj. JAMES A. RODGERS 03885571 AC Bap Up Commander
   Maj. WALTER E. RAMBO
   Capt. JAMES E. HARDIN 0658300 AC Base S-2 O
   Capt. WILLIAM S. CRA REN
   Capt. JOHN D. PULITZ 0197867 AC Base Oprms 0
   Capt. CHARLES P. HOLLAND 0197867 AC Base Oprms 0
   Lt. COL. JOHN H. SCHMIDT
   Senior Accident Officer

   Complied with AIF Reg 52-4, as amended by AIF Reg 62-12a and AIF Reg 62-12b, and 2AF Memo 150-9, dd 24 Jan 1944 is directed.

   The committee herein appointed supersedes any previous boards.

By order of Lt. Col. PERSONS

ROBERT S. WETZEL
1st Lt., Air Corps
Adjutant

OFFICIAL

SPECIAL ORDER

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON, WASHINGTON
21 November 1943

1. The following named EK, Med Rec ASFIC, this sta, having appeared before the Base Classification Board are reclassified under the provisions of 2AF Memo 35-7, as follows:

   T/4 ROBERT O. HEBBARD
   3740326               From 1157
   To 417

   T/5 CHARLES E. PAULSELL
   37405876              609
   673

2. For 11 90 312, this Hq, is amended as follows:

   TO REHEART: CPL (693) EDWIN M. CONRAD
   17037209 7/48th Bomb Sq, 457th Bomb Gp (H)
   (For EK to be to 53rd Repd Wing Det.)

3. An Acft Accident Committee consisting of the following named O is hereby constituted will meet at the call of the Senior Member:

   Lt. Col. STANLEY M. PERSONS 0105070 AC Base Commander
   Lt. Col. GORDON B. PALLAS 0213742 AC Op Commander
   Maj. JAMES A. RODGERS 03885571 AC Bap Up Commander
   Maj. WALTER E. RAMBO
   Capt. JAMES E. HARDIN 0658300 AC Base S-2 O
   Capt. WILLIAM S. CRA REN
   Capt. JOHN D. PULITZ 0197867 AC Base Oprms 0
   Capt. CHARLES P. HOLLAND 0197867 AC Base Oprms 0
   Lt. COL. JOHN H. SCHMIDT
   Senior Accident Officer

   Complied with AIF Reg 52-4, as amended by AIF Reg 62-12a and AIF Reg 62-12b, and 2AF Memo 150-9, dd 24 Jan 1944 is directed.

   The committee herein appointed supersedes any previous boards.

By order of Lt. Col. PERSONS

ROBERT S. WETZEL
1st Lt., Air Corps
Adjutant

OFFICIAL
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR BASE  
Office of the Commanding Officer  
Ephrata, Washington  

VIA REGISTERED MAIL

360.32 G  

30 November 1943  

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident Report - B-17F 42-30483.  

TO: Commanding General, Flight Control Command, Army Air Forces,  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina.  

Forwarded herewith is aircraft accident report on B-17F airplane No.  
42-30483, in compliance with Memorandum 150-9, Headquarters Second Air Force,  
dated 19 July 1943. The accident occurred on 20 November 1943.  

For the Commanding Officer:  

HOWARD B. WHITMARSH  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Adjutant.  

1 Incl:  
Aircraft Accident Report
ACCIDENT CHECK LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pilot History</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMITH, WARREN G.</td>
<td>SMITH, WARREN G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Lt. Air Corps</td>
<td>2ndLt : P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>2nd Lt: OP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>2nd Lt : P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>2nd Lt : N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>427th Bomb Group (H)</td>
<td>Killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty</td>
<td>Killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot on Combat Crew</td>
<td>Killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission AC from Harvard, Nebraska</td>
<td>Killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hours</td>
<td>445100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hrs. This Type 130'50&quot;</td>
<td>Schauer, George G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hrs. This Model 130'50&quot;</td>
<td>Chapman, Benjamin F., Jr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saltini, David (WI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saxier, Allen D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance Form</td>
<td>Clay, Giambalva.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checked O.K.</td>
<td>Ruzinski, Joseph (W1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot’s Remarks</td>
<td>Sgt. AABG Minor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None

Any unusual conditions of airplane

None determined

Duration of Flight

2 Hrs., 16 Min.

Type of Clearance

Instrument.

AT THE ACCIDENT

Sketch
Attached.

Weather

High broken; visibility 10-15 miles

Terrain

Rolling, fairly flat terrain. Crashed in flat plowed field.
THE AIRPLANE

Position of

Switches (Ignition)
Fuel Valves
Throttle
Mixture
Prop Controls
Feathering Controls
Wheel Retracting Controls
Flap Retracting Controls
Trim Tab Controls
Supercharger Controls
Automatic Pilot Controls
De-Icer Controls
Carb. Air Heater Controls
Cockpit Heat Controls
Control Lock Controls
Parking Brake Controls

Stick
Rudder
Wheels
Flaps
Shutter Controls
Engine Cowl Flap Controls
Primer Controls
Oil Dilution Controls

Reading of

Clock
Electrical Instruments
Engine Instruments
Flight Instruments
Fuel Gauges

CHECK FOR BINDING, BREAKAGE, ETC., OF CONTROL RODS, HELICRANKS, TORQUE TUBES, CABLE PULLEYS, ETC., FOR

Throttle
Mixture
Ailerons
Rudder
Elevators
Trim Tabs
Supercharger
Automatic Pilot
Brakes
Landing Gear Retracting Mechanism
Flap Retracting Mechanism
Tail Wheel Retracting Mechanism
Dual Controls Retracting Mechanism
CHECK

Amount of fuel in tanks 1600-1700 gallons on departure
Safety Belts not determined
Amount of oil in tanks full at departure
AAF Form No. 1 for any entries destroyed
Parachutes—any evidence of attempted use 5 attempted use—A successful 2 killed
Flares none

Check all control surfaces for freedom of movement and for presence of foreign object which might have caused sticking or locking.
Airplane destroyed

Check to see if there are any parts of the airplane missing.
Airplane destroyed

Check loading of the airplane—amount and distribution.
Airplane destroyed.

Check to see if there is any evidence of structural failure. (Structural failures should be checked for flaws, corrosion, bad welds, etc..)
Airplane destroyed.

Is there any evidence of fire—how and where did it start?
Airplane burned on impact—probably fuel tanks and engines.

Check AAF Form No. 1 for entries which might have indicated an unusual condition of the airplane or equipment.
Form destroyed.

Was the radio information chart in the airplane?
Yes

Was the "Check List" in the airplane?
Yes

Was there any evidence pointing to sabotage? Assume the existence of Sabotage until Proven otherwise.
No evidence
THE ENGINE

Check for evidence of structural failure. Destroyed

Were there any parts missing? Destroyed

Turn the engine over by hand to check for freedom of movement. Destroyed

Check for stoppages in fuel and oil lines. Destroyed

Check all screens and strainers for the presence of foreign objects. Destroyed

Check carb. air intake for the presence of foreign objects. Destroyed

Make observations in attempt to determine amount of power at time of accident.

Survivors' evidence shows full power.

Check carb. for control position and check back against cockpit controls. Destroyed

Check Cuno Oil Cleaner. Destroyed

GENERAL

Secure statements from all witnesses.

Attached

Are the witnesses qualified to give accurate testimony? (Rate testimony of witnesses "reliable", etc.)

Yes, reliable.

What damage was done to private property?

Slight damage.

Last radio contact made with ground station.

Sphrata Tower had never received any contact from the ship.

Are weather reports in locality normal or would teletype sequence show irregularities in this particular locality?

Take photographs when of value.

Photographs are attached.
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

a. Pilot Time. Day 120'10" Night 62'25" Instrument 66'05"

b. Last Instrument check 11 November 1943 Station Ephrata, Wash.

By 1st Lt. J. W. H. Wilson, Cpt., B-17F

c. Pilot fatigue (yes) (did not) exist.

d. Recreational Facilities at this Base:
   1. Theatre
   2. Service (EM)
   3. Athletic Fields
   4. Gymnasium
   5. N.C.O. Club
   6. Officers Club
   7. Day rooms in every squadron

e. Flight Surgeon's Statement (is) (is not) attached.

f. Control Tower Officer and his qualifications.
   ROBERT E. EMENHOFF, Capt., Air Corps.
   Qualified as Control Tower Officer in accordance with 2nd A.F. Mem. 60-19

---

**g. Statement of Group Weather Office:**

1. Ceiling at 6000 to 6500 feet, caused by a deck of stratus; visibility unlimited (10 miles or better), wind WNW to WSW 5 to 7 miles per hour; no precipitation. (Weather report at Ephrata)

2. From all indications the weather at Wescroft, approximately 30 miles northwest of Ephrata, was the same as that at Ephrata.

3. Hourly teletype reports for EF (Ephrata AAB) and DPH (Hones Lake AAB) for 1730, 1830, 1930, 2030 PWT and for PHT (Harrington for 1830 PWT are enclosed.

   (Signed) CHARLES D. WEVER

   Group Weather Officer

   CHARLES D. WEVER;

   2nd Lt., Air Corps.

   Staff Weather Officer

h. Statement as to supervision is attached.

i. Aircraft Maintenance

(1) Following are available for day and night operations:
   (a) Spare parts (Yes) (No)
   (b) Suitable Lighting Equipment (Yes) (No)
   (c) Transportation (Yes) (No)
   (d) Adequate shelter for protection from heat and cold (Yes) (No)
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR ACTION
FOR INFO
FOR FILE

DATE 21 NOVEMBER 1943

TELEGRAM

WS\AL 361 V ARL 463-464 OV NR 17
FROM PERSONS COZAB EPHRATA WASHN 211030Z
TO CHIEF FLYING SAFETY WINSTONSALEM, NCR
EAB 6576 PD

A 20 NOV 1943 AT APPROX 0225Z 6 MILES NNW WILSON CREEK WASHINGTON
B PILOT WARREN G SMITH 2ND LT AUS 0-745761 2AF 749TH BOMB SQ 457TH
BOMB GP EPHRATA AAB EPHRATA WASH PD

C AUS 2ND AF 2ND LT JOHN DAVID SALTIEL

Q-694726 AUS 2ND AF 2ND LT DAVID H ARMSTRONG 0-748316 AUS 2ND AF USED PARACHUTE WHICH FAILED RESULTING IN FATAL INJURY PD SURVIVING CREW MEMBER REPORTED CAUSE AS OPENING OF CHUTE PRIOR TO CLEARING AP RESULTING IN CHUTE CATCHING INSIDE AP HUT PROBABLY SWINGING OFFICER AGAINST STABILIZER SEMICOLON CREW MEMBER FREED CHUTE AND NOTED OFFICER WAS BLEEDING BADLY PD OFFICER WAS LOCATED ON GROUND WITH BADLY TORN CHUTE PD

DATE 21 NOVEMBER 1943

SCHECHER 5
ENGINES 555
PROPS 555

125800 37 92 00 117 240

GEOFFREY C. HANNA

12922104J
RUSINKO 37541322 ROG NEW CHUTES SUCCESSFULLY SUFFERING ONLY
SHOCK AND MINOR INJURIES PC
E FERRY AND NAVIGATION TRIP RETURNING FROM HARVARD AAB NEBRASKA PD
F THIN CLOUD LAYER AT 1000 FEET PD
G AP NUMBER 42-30483 REPEAT 42-30483 B-17F PD
H EPHRATA AAB EPHRATA WASHINGTON
I TOTALLY DESTROYED
J NOT BELIEVED MATERIEL FAILURE BY GROUP CO
K COMPLETE LOSS PD TURNED OVER TO SUB DEPOT FOR DISPOSITION
L NEGLIGIBLE AFACG NOTIFIED
M 14 HOURS FLYING TIME SINCE 25 HOUR MAINTENANCE INSPECTION ON 17
NOVEMBER 1943 PD REPORT DELAYED DUE TO LACK OF POSITIVE INFORMATION
PD END
SENT 19542