

**RESTRICTED**

WAR DEPARTMENT  
AAF STATION 107  
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

ACCIDENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_

45-2-1-539

3-23-2162-0 REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

79

(1) Place AAF Station No. 107 (2) Date 1 February 1945 (3) Time 1506

AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17G DO (5) A. F. No. 43-38927 (6) Station AAF No. 106

Organization: (7) SAP (8) 384th Bomb (H) (9) 544th Bombardment (H)  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL BH

2357

DOVT	NAME (Last name first)	RATING	SERIAL NO.	RANK	PERSONNEL CLASS	BRANCH	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND	RESULT TO PERSONNEL	USE OF PARACHUTE
(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
P	Springsted, Donald G.	P	0-695175	1st Lt	18	AC	8th	None	None
P	Gray, Harold R.	P	0-331114	2nd Lt	18	AC	8th	None	None
N	Berwald, Raymond E.	B	0-2061330	2nd Lt	18	AC	8th	None	None
TG	Meyers, Ben R.		18215149	Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
R	Winter, Louis A.		17136162	S/Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
TT	DeMattei, Laurence E.		39136714	S/Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
BT	Volpe, Roland (NMI)		35526329	Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
TG	Meyette, Raymond P.		31117265	Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
FG	Taliaferro, Phillip A.		13062543	Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None

(20) Springsted, Donald G. (21) 0-695175 (22) 1st Lt (23) 18 (24) AC  
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)

Assigned (25) 8th (26) 384th Bomb (27) 544th Bomb (H) (28) AAF No. 106  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)

Attached for flying (29) Pilot (30) 3 Nov 43 (31) Pilot (32) 3 Nov 43 (33) 23 Sept 44  
(Command and Air Force) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Rating)

Original rating (34) Pilot (35) 3 Nov 43 Present rating (36) Pilot (37) 3 Nov 43 Instrument rating (38) 23 Sept 44  
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(39) This type 147:55 (40) Instrument time last 6 months 4:00  
(40) This model 147:55 (41) Instrument time last 30 days 1:00  
(41) Last 90 days 66:50 (42) Night time last 6 months 4:50  
(42) Total 774:05 (43) Night time last 30 days 0:00

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(44) Aircraft <u>N</u>	Ball turret salvaged. R. inboard and outboard wing
(45) Engine(s) <u>1</u>	panels damaged. minor damage to left inboard wing
(46) Propeller(s) <u>1</u>	panel.

(47) Weather at the time of accident 5/10 cloud at 3000' - 10 mi vis - wind WSW at 2 MPH

(48) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No

(49) Cleared from AAF-106 (50) To AAF 106 (51) Kind of clearance Contact

(52) Pilot's mission Return from operational mission

(53) Nature of accident Landing Accident

(54) Cause of accident Landing long on runway with three engines out and right landing gear only partially retracted.

14-60-81

# DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

I About 1510 hours, 1 February 1945, aircraft number 43-38927 from AAF Station 106 flew over the field and fired a red red flare. The aircraft proceeded past the field in a Northwest direction, then made a right turn and attempted to land on runway 20. With two engines feathered and his right landing gear only partially extended, he landed about two-thirds of the way down the runway. The partially extended wheel collapsed and he slid off the end of the runway considerably damaging the ship.

Interrogation of the crew indicated that they were endeavoring to return directly to base in a "Hot Camera Ship" with their film when they ran low on gasoline. The pilot had been warned of this situation twice before he chose to land at AAF Station 107. The electric motor failed to lower the right landing gear and the engineer failed to turn the hand crank sufficiently to lower the gear completely. Number four engine quit on final approach and aircraft could not have gone around on one engine.

II 100% Pilot Error.

III None.

Signature

EDUAR E. SNYDER, JR., Col., AC.

RICHARD H. COLE, Lt. Col., AC.

WILLIAM C. HELLER, Major, AC.

Date 14 February, 1945.

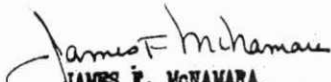
Hq 505 USAPF/6-43/19N/10404

S T A T E M E N T

We were returning as "Hot Camera" from mission. Running out of fuel, we prepared to land at an alternate field. The right wheel would neither extend electrically or mechanically. I told the Engineer to crank the right wheel down. He cranked approximately four (4) turns and then he felt it break and the crank turned freely without any effect. Numbers 2 and 3 engines quit on the downwind leg and #4 on the final approach. We proceeded to make a one wheel landing.

/s/ Donald G. Springsted,  
/t/ DONALD G. SPRINGSTED,  
1st Lt, AC,  
Pilot.

A TRUE COPY:

  
JAMES F. McNAMARA,  
Captain, AC.

S T A T E M E N T

Gas was running low. Co-Pilot warned Pilot. Co-Pilot warned Pilot again. We were returning from mission and was "Hot Camera". Number 3 engine cut out. Number 3 was feathered and I put the landing gear switch in the downward position; left wheel and tail wheel extended. I neutralized the gear switch and told Engineer to crank the right wheel down manually. He proceeded to crank the wheel down. By crank, he unlocked the wheel and it dropped enough to show that it was unlocked. The crank would not lower it any farther. Then, #2 engine cut out and that was feathered. The Engineer still tried to crank the wheel down but it would not extend.

/s/ Harold R. Gray,  
/t/ HAROLD R. GRAY,  
2nd Lt, AC,  
Co-Pilot.

A TRUE COPY:

*James F. McNamara*  
JAMES F. McNAMARA,  
captain, AC.

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STATEMENT

On returning from mission (Hot Camera Ship), we were not in formation. As we hit the coast, we noticed that the fuel supply was low. We proceeded toward Base. Approximately 50 miles from Base, Numbers 2 and 3 engines started cutting out. Feathered #3 and 2 respectively. The Co-Pilot tried to lower the landing gear by the regular way (electrical); the left wheel came down but the right wheel failed to come down, so I started to crank it down. I cranked about 75 to 80 full turns but the wheel would not come down. I then went back in to the cockpit. Then we crash landed the aircraft.

/s/ Lawrence C. Demattie,  
/t/ LAWRENCE C. DEMATTIE,  
Engineer.

A TRUE COPY:

*James F. McHamara*  
JAMES F. McHAMARA,  
Captain, AC.

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S-T-A-T-E-M-E-N-T

14 February, 1945.

1. On 1 February, 1945, inspection of B-17G aircraft, AAF Serial number 43-38927, was made after it crash landed with the right main landing gear retracted, and the following report is submitted.

a. The right main landing gear assembly was found to be approximately thirty (30) turns of the hand crank from the fully retracted position, and in perfect condition with the exception of damage received in landing.


b. The aircraft was placed on jacks and the right main landing gear was checked for both manual and electrical retraction. Perfect operation was obtained by manual operation with the hand crank. (T.O. 01-20-13 had been complied with on this aircraft; which incorporates a separate manual retracting unit). The upper limit switch setting was checked and found to be opening the circuit  $3/4$  turn of the hand crank from fully retracted position. (T.O. 01-20-102 shows 1 plus-or-minus  $1/8$  turns of hand crank for this type retracting unit). This high setting of the upper limit switch would allow the neoprene bumper to engage harder, thus requiring a higher torque to break them loose. The electrical retracting unit (Eclipse, part number 1073-2-B), was removed and bench checked. The clutch setting, which should have been 100 pound feet, was only 55 pound feet. With the landing gear fully retracted, the electric motor could not produce enough torque to break the retracting mechanism loose from the neoprene bumper, due to the high compression on the bumpers and the low setting of the clutch. This would account for the right landing gear not extending electrically but in no way would prevent manual operation. The landing gear electrical circuit was checked and found serviceable.

c. All fuel tanks were empty with the exception of number four (4) which contained forty (40) gallons.

d. All four engines were inspected and no indication of internal failures were found.

2. To manually extend the landing gear requires 250 turns of the hand crank, and it is believed the Engineer did not realize this, and thought the landing gear to be faulty.

3. This aircraft came to rest approximately 200 yards beyond the end of the runway, and it should be noted that an aircraft with one wheel retracted can land in a shorter space than one with both wheels extended.

  
QUENTIN W. HARGROVE,  
Captain, AC,  
Gp Engineering Officer.

S-T-A-T-E-M-E-N-T

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STATEMENT

1 February 1945

- A. Pilot.. 1st Lt. Springstead.  
Aircraft..#338927
- B. Date of Accident..1 February 1945.
- C. Surface Wind.. WSW 15 mph, Runway 27.
- D. Airfield inspected 1300 hrs.
- E. Statement;

1. At 1510 hrs. 1 February 1945, aircraft #338927 from Grafton Underwood came over the field and fired a red red flare. He was headed in a North West direction but after passing over the field he made a right turn and came in to land on runway 20. I could then see that he had number two and three engines feathered and only one wheel down. He landed on the last third of runway and immediately went off the left side of runway and on for about 300 yds. of the end of runway before ground looping.

2. I did not give the aircraft a red signal to go around even though I could see only one wheel was down and was landing on wrong runway. It was easy to see that he was in trouble and could not go around.

  
HARRY M. McDANIEL,  
Captain, Air Corps.,  
Senior Flying Control Officer.

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GAD-451-2-303 (1, FEB. 45) (43-38 927) CRASH LANDING



