

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT  
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

Accident No. 45-3-19-522

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place AAF Station 106 (2) Date 19 March 1945 (3) Time 1730  
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17G DO (5) A. E. No. 44-6590 (6) Station 106  
Organization: (7) 8th (8) 38th Bomb (9) 54th Bomb (Squadron) 2357  
(Command and Air Force) (Group)

PERSONNEL

DUTY	NAME (Last name first)	RATING	SERIAL NO.	RANK	PERSONNEL CLASS	BRANCH	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND	RESULTS TO PERSONNEL	USE OF PARACHUTE
(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
P	Pierce, Oscar W.	P	0-669917	1st Lt.	01	AC	8th	None	None
W	Espey, Albert N.	P	0-781265	2nd Lt.	18	AC	8th	None	None
N	Clafin, Richard E.	N	T-134496	F/O	17	AC	8th	None	None
TG	Rozkuski, William B.		31350741	Sgt.	38	AC	8th	None	None
RO	Palmer, Eldo L.		17136188	S/Sgt.	38	AC	8th	None	None
TT	Taylor, Charles E.		6987119	S/Sgt.	21	AC	8th	None	None
ET	Read, Alfred J.		36686851	Sgt.	38	AC	8th	None	None
TG	Polowy, Thaddeus		12027934	Sgt.	38	AC	8th	None	None
EG	Newbauer, Robert F.		36842198	Sgt.	38	AC	8th	None	None
RCM	Pacocha, Edward J.		31349950	Sgt.	38	AC	8th	None	None

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) Pierce Oscar W (21) 0-669917 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 01 (24) AC  
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)  
Assigned (25) 8th (26) 38th Bomb (27) 54th Bomb (28) 106  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
Attached for flying (29) 8th (30) 38th Bomb (31) 54th Bomb (32) 106  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 11/1/43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 11/1/43 Instrument rating (37) 28/11/44  
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type 602:40 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 16:00  
(39) This model 277:00 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 1:15  
(40) Last 90 days 155:25 (44) Night time last 6 months 30:45  
(41) Total 1007:15 (45) Night time last 30 days 0:00

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(46) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft	Right inner and outer wing panel, Fuselage wrinkled
(47) Engine(s)	and caved in between stations 5 & 6, wrinkled at root
(48) Propeller(s)	of left wing, left inner wing panel. Salvaged.

(50) Weather at the time of accident Clouds 10/10ths, base 700 feet; visibility 6 miles; wind SSW at 20 MPH. Light intermittent rain.

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

(52) Cleared from Station 106 (53) To Operational (54) Kind of clearance Operational

(55) Pilot's mission Operational

(56) Nature of accident Taxiing accident.

(57) Cause of accident Pilot error (carelessness) and material failure.

01-21-464-71

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

The airplane was landed satisfactorily, upon completion of an operational mission, and was turned off the runway and taxied with the assistance of brakes which were apparently working satisfactorily. After clearing the runway, the pilot decided to use his inboard engines to taxi as one of the outboards (#4) was feathered so he cut the other outboard (#1) and proceeded towards his assigned dispersal point. After taxiing about 1000 feet, and upon starting a left turn, the pilot noticed that he was not getting results from the brakes - some confusion followed during which time he applied full power alternately on both inboard engines, increasing his taxi speed, and executed an uncontrolled left turn until the right wing struck a tree and stopped the aircraft. It has been determined by the Accident Board that the hydraulic system was actually out temporarily although the investigation immediately following the accident disclosed no malfunction of the system. This failure of the system has been assessed 25% of the responsibility. The pilot was given 75% of the responsibility for taxiing at an excessive rate of speed, under the circumstances, and for not instructing the co-pilot to use the emergency hand pump to build up the pressure.

It is the opinion of this Accident Board that preventative action should include closer supervision over taxiing by Flying Control with special emphasis on fast taxiing.

*Philip Y. Williams*  
Signature PHILIP Y. WILLIAMS, Maj., AC.  
(Investigating Officer)

*T. D. Hutchinson*  
T. D. HUTCHINSON, Maj., AC.

*N. Hansen*  
N. HANSEN, Maj., AC.

DATE		STATION	GROUP, No. & TYPE	AIRCRAFT MODEL				
March 19, 1945		106	384th Bomb Gp (H)	B-17G				
CREW CHIEF OR AERIAL ENGINEER			SQUADRON NO. & TYPE	AIRCRAFT SERIAL NO.				
S/Sgt Sam C. Lewis			544th Bomb Sq (H)	44-6590				
PERS. CLASS	-PRINT PLAINLY- NAME-ASN.-GRADE-ORGANIZATION		USE AS DIRECTED LOCALLY	ALWAYS ENTER DUTY SYMBOLS, WHEN APPLICABLE. ENTER N-NIGHT OR I-INSTRUMENT. ENTER TIME FLOW THEREUNDER.				FLIGHT DATA
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
			DUTY N OR I	DUTY N OR I	DUTY N OR I	DUTY N OR I	TERMINALS AND MISSION	
01	Pierce, Oscar W. 1st Lt. O-669916	544th	P	AI			FROM: 106 TO: 08:45	
18	Esey, Albert N. 2nd Lt. O-71265	544th	CP	AI			TO: Combat 17:45	
17	Claflin, Richard E. P/O T-134496	544th	N				MISSION: Combat NO. OF LANDINGS 1 9:00	
20	Taylet, Charles E. S/Sgt 6957119	544th	E				FROM: TO: :	
38	Palmer, Elde L. S/Sgt 17136188	544th	RO				MISSION: NO. OF LANDINGS :	
38	Rezkuski, William B. Sgt 3135074	544th	Reg				FROM: TO: :	
38	Polowy, Thaddaus Sgt. 42027934	544th	G				MISSION: NO. OF LANDINGS :	
38	Newbauer, Robert P. Sgt 36842198	544th	G				FROM: TO: :	
38	Reed, Alfred J. Sgt 3668651	544th	G				MISSION: NO. OF LANDINGS :	
38	Pacoscha, Edward J. S/Sgt 31349950	544th	RCM				FROM: TO: :	
							MISSION: NO. OF LANDINGS :	
							FROM: TO: :	
							MISSION: NO. OF LANDINGS :	
							FROM: TO: :	
							MISSION: NO. OF LANDINGS :	

WAR DEPARTMENT  
A. F. FORM NO. 1  
REV. (1 JAN. 44)

**AIRPLANE FLIGHT REPORT-OPERATIONS**

CHECKED: \_\_\_\_\_  
LEGIBLE AND CORRECT

OPER. CLERK ☐

TRANSCRIBED: \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL FLIGHT TIME ENTERED ON FORM 1A

CREW CHIEF ☒

TOTAL FLIGHT TIME **9:00**

REPORT - OPERATIONS  
LEGIBLE AND  
DIRECT

AIRPLANE FLIGHT RECORD - ENGINEERING

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INSPECTION STATUS				SERVICING AT STATION OF TAKE-OFF (CHECK IMMEDIATELY BEFORE TAKE-OFF)											
DATE OF OR HOURS DUE	INSPECTED TODAY			SERVICE	FUEL (GALLONS)		OIL (QUARTS)								RADIATOR CHECKED
	BY	STATION			SERV. ICED	IN TANKS	NO. 1		NO. 2		NO. 3		NO. 4		
PREFLIGHT	mbw 19-45	W													
DAILY	mbw 19-45														
25 HOURS	283:15			1ST	2700		140		140		140		140		
50 HOURS	308:15			2ND											
100 HOURS	310:10			3RD											
PLUGS	283:15			4TH											
BATTS.				5TH											

INSPECTION OF AUXILIARY EQUIPMENT				STATUS TODAY		EXPLANATION
EQUIPMENT	SYMBOL	INSPECTED BY	STATION	1.	2.	
BOMBARDMENT	H	HYDE	106			Compass Swing Due. Flux Gate Compass Off.
GUNNERY	R	ROZKINSKI				
<del>COMM. RADAR</del>	D	DREXLER	106			
COMMUNICATIONS	H	HUMENVCK	106			
PHOTOGRAPHIC						<p>EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE</p> <p>WHEN THE "STATUS TODAY" IS INDICATED BY A RED SYMBOL, AND AN "EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE" HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED BY AN AUTHORIZED MAINTENANCE OFFICER, THE PILOT OF THE AIRCRAFT WILL SIGN THIS RELEASE BEFORE FLIGHT.</p>
NAVIGATION						
02	W	375 & Blvd.				<p>RELEASED FOR FLIGHT</p> <p>1. A.W. PIERCE</p> <p>2. _____</p>

REMARKS: PILOTS AND MECHANICS - SEE INSTRUCTIONS INSIDE FRONT COVER.		AIRCRAFT AND ENGINE TIME RECORD (ENTER IN HOURS AND MINUTES)				
Chks. Satis. on Pre-flight. Sgt. WEBB		ENGINE	NO. 1	NO. 2	NO. 3	NO. 4
#1 Engine Failure. Right Wing Damaged		HOURS TO DATE	275:30	32:00	275:30	275:30
Flight Indicator Removed. Sgt. J CAMPBELL		HOURS TODAY	9:00	9:00		
Ball Turret Door Removed T/Sgt. GREER		TOTAL	284:30	41:00	284:30	284:30
		OIL CHANGE DUE	ENGINE CHANGE			
		CUMULATIVE DUE	308:15			
		AIRCRAFT	HOURS TO DATE	275:30		
			HOURS TODAY	9:00		
			TOTAL	284:30		

A TRUE COPY:

*Thomas P. Davis*  
THOMAS P. DAVIS,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
Group Engineering Officer

DATE	AIRCRAFT ORG. DATA	AIRCRAFT DATA	ENGINE DATA	
MARCH 19'45	AIR FORCE	COMPONENT	ENGINE MODEL	
	VIII	A.A.F.B. (H)	R1820-97	
STATION	COMD., SERV. COMD. OR DEP'T		SERIAL NO.	SERIAL NO.
106	1st Wing		SMO27762	SMO27639
	GROUP NO. & TYPE	AIRCRAFT MODEL	SERIAL NO.	SERIAL NO.
CREW CHIEF OR ENGINEER	384 BOMB (H)	B-17G	SMO15448	SMO27774
S/Sgt. SAM C. LEWIS	544 BOMB (H)	44-6590	TOTAL FLIGHT TIME	
			9:00	

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WAR DEPARTMENT  
AAF Form No. 54  
(Revised 2-18-43)

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WAR DEPARTMENT

ARMY AIR FORCES

UNSATISFACTORY REPORT

(See AAF Reg. 15-54 for information on Proper Use of this Form)

TO BE FILLED IN BY STATION	
STATION SERIAL No.	DATE SUBMITTED
	22-3-45

LEAVE BLANK		
A. S. C. SERIAL No.	REFER TO	CLASS

STATION AAF 106, APO 557		ORGANIZATION Hq. 381st Bomb Group (H)	
SUBJECT OF REPORT 03C-2 Switch Assy. solenoid type B-4	Property Class—Name	Manufacturer	AAF Order or Shipping No.
AIRCRAFT—Model & AAF Serial No.	ENGINE—Model & AAF Serial No.	UNIT OR ACCESSORY—Type, Model and Serial No.	
AIRCRAFT REPORTS ONLY LAST D. I. R.—Depot None	Date	Flying Time Since	Total Flying Time
ENGINE REPORTS ONLY LAST OVERHAUL—Depot	Hours Since	Depots and Hours At Each Previous Overhaul	
Name Switch Assy. solenoid type B-4		Part Drawing, Serial and Specification No. Part # 1202-596755	
Time in Use 281:30	Quantity on Hand 65	Quantity Known Defective None	No. Previous Failures
Inspector's No. or Identification	Manufacturer		
Indicate by "X" Disposition of Exhibit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photographed and Prints Enclosed	<input type="checkbox"/> Held for Instructions	<input type="checkbox"/> Sent Under Separate Cover
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sent in Attached Package	<input type="checkbox"/> Repaired and Returned to Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Disposed of (Explain Below.)
	<input type="checkbox"/> To Overhaul Facility (INITIALS)		

GIVE COMPLETE DETAILS, PROBABLE CAUSES AND RECOMMENDATIONS BELOW:  
(Use Only Applicable Spaces Above—Avoid Unnecessary Repetition)

EXPEDITE

1. Aircraft B-17G 44-6590 landed returning from an operational mission. Brakes on the run way and for about one thousand (1000) yards around the perimeter operated O.K. but then after taxing this distance brakes were needed again and pilot and co-pilot claimed no brakes were available which caused the aircraft to run into a tree.

2. It is believed that the switch assy solenoid type B-4 may have stuck momentarily causing the brake pressure to be lost. Solenoid was found slightly burnt although after the accident the whole system was checked and found O.K. Hydraulic pressure was eight hundred (800) pounds. The brakes were worked causing the pressure to go down and the hydraulic pump cut in building the pressure up again.

3. Since no previous trouble has been encountered this U.R. is submitted only to accompany the form 14 in this case.

*N. Hansen*  
for THOMAS P. DAVIS,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
Group Engr. Officer.

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ROUTING

SEND ORIGINAL AND TWO COPIES DIRECT TO COMMANDING GENERAL,  
HQ. AIR SERVICE COMMAND, PATTERSON FIELD, FAIRFIELD, OHIO.

☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1945 16-34610-1

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STATEMENT BY 1ST LT OSCAR W. PIERCE, O-669917, CONCERNING ACCIDENT OF AIRCRAFT

# 44-6590, 19 MARCH 1945:

"Leaving formation due to engine trouble, and after dropping my bombs I proceeded to base without undue trouble. When reaching French Coast, I used hydraulic pressure to operate cowl flaps for engine cooling. At this time I placed switch in automatic position. The cowl flaps were operated several times on return to base and hydraulic pressure checked O.K. Arriving at base I made my landing at 17:30 hours. The hydraulic pressure at time of landing was checked and found to be normal. I used brakes to slow my roll and also to turn from runway. The cowl flaps were opened at this time. After lining up for a straight taxi, the tail wheel was locked and a normal taxi was made to first left turn on the taxi strip. The tail wheel was unlocked at this point and using my right engine I proceeded to make turn. After getting plane in turn, I then tried to stop or straighten it and had no pressure for brakes. When brakes failed, I used full left throttle to stop turn, but by this time I was off runway and heading for a tree. I then cut left engine and tried to ground loop plane before striking tree, but this just increased my speed, so both engines were cut and the plane struck the tree with the right wing and at this time the hydraulic pressure pump started running which built the pressure up to normal. Hydraulic pressure was called out as O.K. When we had completed roll and while on our initial landing and fast roll, the engineer called hydraulic pressure O.K."


*Oscar W. Pierce*  
OSCAR W. PIERCE,  
1st Lt, Air Corps,  
Pilot.

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STATEMENT BY 2nd LT. ALBERT N. ESPEY, O-781265, CONCERNING ACCIDENT  
OF AIRCRAFT 44-6590, 19 MARCH 1945.

The hydraulic system was checked on before landing check and was operating normally. Upon landing the hydraulic system was used to open cowl flaps and slow down the landing roll. The brakes were working when the turn off the end of the runway was made. We taxied to the turn parallel to runway 30 and while making the turn it was first noticed that the hydraulic system was out. The turn was tried to be made with the engines, immediately we went off the perimeter and before the aircraft could be stopped it hit a tree causing damage to the airplane. When the airplane stopped I could hear the hydraulic pump operating, building up the hydraulic pressure. I do not know the reason for the hydraulic failure.

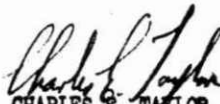
  
ALBERT N. ESPEY,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps,  
Co-Pilot.

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STATEMENT BY S/SGT CHARLES E. TAYLOR, ~~XXXX~~6987119, CONCERNING  
ACCIDENT OF AIRCRAFT 44-6590, 19 MARCH 1945.

The landing was a normal landing. Hydraulic pressure was up. The plane was slowed down and turned onto the taxi strip at the end of the runway. We had taxied approximately 1,000 yards and attempted to make a slight turn to the right. The first indication I had that anything was wrong was the pilot revving the engines in an attempt to keep the plane straight. We swung off the left side of the runway and headed directly for a tree. The #4 engine was feathered; so the pilot revved #1 in an attempt to swing clear, but we hit the tree with our right wing. It all happened very swiftly, and I didn't realize that the brakes were out until a few seconds before we hit. As we hit the tree, the hydraulic pump motor started running.

  
CHARLES E. TAYLOR,  
S/Sgt., Air Corps,  
Aerial Engineer.

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EDWARDS  
AAF STATION NO. 106  
Office of the Flying Control Officer

R-D-1

20 March, 1945.

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident.

TO : COMMANDING OFFICER, AAF Station No. 106, APO 557, U.S. Army.

1. At 1725 hrs., 19 March 1945, aircraft 6590, pilot Lt. Pierce landed early from operation with No. 4 propeller feathered.

2. While taxiing to dispersal area the pilot called on R/T saying his brake pressure had failed and that his aircraft had hit a tree to the left of the perimeter track.

3. Ambulance and fire tender were dispatched to the scene of accident. All concerned were notified.

*James H. Bills*  
JAMES H. BILLS  
1st Lt. & C.  
Duty Flying Control Officer.

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HEADQUARTERS  
AAF STATION NO. 106  
Office of the Intelligence Officer

APO . 557,  
23 March 1945.

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident Report of B-17G 44-6590 of the 544th Bombardment Squadron, 384th Bombardment Group (H), AAF Station No. 106, APO 557, 19 March 1945.

TO : Commanding General, Headquarters, First Air Division, APO 557, U. S. Army.

1. The following report on the above subject is hereby submitted:

FACTS: Aircraft Number 44-6590 of the 544th Bombardment Squadron, 384th Bombardment Group (H), AAF Station 106, APO 557, piloted by 1st Lt. Oscar W. Pierce, O-669917, 544th Bombardment Squadron, 384th Bombardment Group, AAF Station 106, APO 557, was returning to his home station after an operational mission over enemy territory with his Number 4 propeller feathered, this engine having failed over enemy territory. When his aircraft had reached the French coast Lt. Pierce used his hydraulic pressure to operate his cowl flaps to cool his engines. He also placed the Pressure Regulating Switch in the automatic position. The pressure checked out normally on the gauge at this time and at the time of landing his aircraft. After making a normal approach to the field and landing he used his brakes to slow down the roll of his aircraft and also to turn from the runway. A normal taxi was made to the first left turn on the taxi strip except he was taxiing on his two inboard engines as his Number 4 engine was inoperative. The tail wheel was unlocked at this point and using his right engine he proceeded to make his turn. After getting his plane into the turn he tried to stop and straighten out his aircraft and found that there was no hydraulic pressure for his brakes. When Lt. Pierce discovered that he had no hydraulic pressure for his brakes he used full left throttle to stop his turn, but by this time he was off the runway, heading for a tree. He then cut his left engine and tried to ground loop his plane before striking the tree but this only increased his speed. Both of his engines were then cut and the plane came in contact with the tree. The right inner and outer wing panels were damaged, the fuselage was wrinkled and caved in at stations Number five and six and the fuselage was wrinkled at the left wing root. Upon striking the tree the hydraulic pressure pump started to operate and it then built up the hydraulic pressure to normal.

2nd Lt. Albert N. Espey, O-781265, was the Co-pilot of the aircraft. He had checked the hydraulic pressure in the aircraft in the air at the same times as had Lt. Pierce and had also found it to be normal. When he became aware that the Pilot's brakes were not functioning properly, he had applied pressure to his right brake, only to find that he had no hydraulic pressure either. He did not attempt to build up the hydraulic pressure with the hand pressure pump.

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S/Sgt. Charles E. Taylor, 6987119, the Engineer of the aircraft, had checked the hydraulic pressure in the air and while the aircraft was taxiing and had found it normal. While the aircraft was on the mission he had drained the system according to Standard Operational Procedure and later had seen that the pressure had been built up when it became necessary to use same. S/Sgt. Taylor said that while he was installing his guns in the aircraft that morning he had bumped against the instrument panel and the hydraulic pressure pump had started to operate and did so for a short time. He had thought at the time that this was unusual, but as it cut itself off in a short time he did not give the matter another thought after noting that the pressure was up to normal. He also noticed that after the aircraft had hit the tree the hydraulic pump had again cut in and built the hydraulic pressure up to normal.

FINDING: It is the opinion of this officer that the taxi accident of 19 March 1945 involving aircraft Number 44-6590 piloted by 1st Lt. Oscar W. Pierce, O-669917, was due to the failure of the hydraulic system of his aircraft and specifically in the failure of the Pressure Regulating Switch to operate properly, which failure was in no way due to sabotage, and also in the failure of 2nd Lt. Albert N. Espey, O-781265, the Co-pilot of Aircraft Number 44-6590, to fully realize the immediate situation and to operate the hand pressure pump to build the hydraulic pressure up to a point for the proper operation of the hydraulic system. An Unsatisfactory Report is being rendered by Major Nicolai Hansen, O-2044535, Station S-4 Officer, of this station on the Pressure Regulating Switch of Aircraft Number 44-6590.

*Alexander L. Jones*  
ALEXANDER L. JONES,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Intelligence Officer Member.

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1st Krupper Ind.

B-7-4

Hq. Eighth Air Force, APO 634, c/o Postmaster, New York, N.Y.

TO: Chief, Flying Safety, AAF, Winston-Salem 1, N.C.

10 APR 1945

1. Transmitted herewith WMAF Form No. 14 and allied papers on the following aircraft accidents:-

- a. 1st Lt. Donald E. Schaefer, B-17G number 43-38377.
- a. 1st Lt. Oscar W. Pierce, B-17G number 44-6550.
- a. 1st Lt. William E. Lantry, B-17G number 43-38718.
- a. Captain James W. Littleford, B-24-120 number 44-49610.
- a. 1st Lt. Elmer E. Robinson, B-17G number 44-8671.
- a. 1st Lt. Eugene D. Stewart, B-17G number 44-8619.
- a. 1st Lt. Robert E. Hopkins, P-51D-10 number 44-14117.
- a. 2nd Lt. Arthur J. McKenna, P-51D-10 number 44-34874.
- a. 2nd Lt. Shirley E. Tobin, O-44A number 44-7625.
- a. 2nd Lt. Reginald A. Hansen, P-51D-10 number 44-72139.
- a. P/O Jack E. Schulte, P-51D-10 number 44-14132.
- a. 1st Lt. William C. Jarvis, P-51D-14 number 44-15139.
- a. P/O Eric H. Lenthley, P-51D-5 number 44-11760.
- a. 2nd Lt. Charles E. Flammie, P-51D-7 number 43-6991.
- a. 2nd Lt. Marshall J. Hansen, B-24 number 44-30509.

2. Copies.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

ROBERTS ARCHER  
Maj. A.G.D.  
Asst. Adj. Gen.

15 Incls.

As above.

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15-AD-384/10-4)(19 Mar 45)(45-44-6590 Taxi Accident)

