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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

- 1. While assembling for a combat mission on 22 February 1944, when the accident involving 1st It. S. R. Jeter, in aircraft number 42-31516, he was flying number four position in the lead squadron of the 384th Bomb Group (H).
- 2. The group climbed through the overcast individually on a heading of approximately 240° and were returning to Molesworth on a heading of 60° to meet the other two groups of the 41st Combat Wing.
- 3. When at a point approximately three to four miles south of our base, a formation appeared on our left and level in a medium bank to their left, as though they intended to join our formation. It was observed seconds later that the formation turning was on a collision course with our group. The group leader, Major G. W. Harris, gr., instructed the pilot of the lead aircraft to dive, since it was the only direction left to maneuver. The pilot did so, however the 303rd Group passed close everhead; it was at this point that It. Jeter's plane collided with one from the 303rd Group.
- 4. Both group leaders involved in the accident are held responsible for the collision, since at least one of them should have realised the situation and positioned his group accordingly, to avoid any possibility of a collision course.
- 5. In order to prevent future accidents of this nature, all leaders are cautioned at each briefing of the importance of the pilot and co-pilot being constantly on the alert during Group, Wing, and Division assemblies, and avoid at all times getting their group on a collision course of another group. Also the lead bombardiers and navigators are being briefed to warn the pilot if in their opinion they are on a collision course with another group.

Signature Nomas P. McCRETT,

Lia Col., Air Corps,

THOMAS P. McCRETT,

Lia Col., Air Corps,

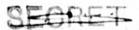
Thur W. Stone Jv.

ARTHUR M. STORE, FR.

1st Lt., Air Corps.

Mg 505 USAPP/6-43/15M/10404

Date 10 March 1944a



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1st Wrapper Ind.

per Ind.

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

28 MAR 1944

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

1. Transmitted herewith WDAAF Forms No. 14 and allied papers on the following aircraft accidents:

- a. 1st Lt. Sydney R. Jeter, B-17G number 42-31516.
- b. Capt. Charles H. Feller, P-47D number 42-8446.
- c. 2nd Lt. Howard K. Phillips, B-24H number 41-28144.
- d. Capt. Rodney (NMI) Freeman, B-24J number 42-109812.
- 2. Concur.

For the Commanding General:

Medicustooo.

Ass I. Adjutant General.

4 Incls: As above.

(39) This model

(46) Aircraft

(47) Engine(s)

DAMAGE

(56) Nature of accident Mid Air Collision

CONFIDENTIAL

ACCIDENT No. ..

Callet

WAR DEPARTMENT

U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place 32 mi, SW of Raunds, Northants (2) Date 22 February, 1944 AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17G V (5) A. P. No. 42-38041 V (6) Station AAF 107 Organization: (7) 8th AF (Sommand and Aff Force) (8 303rd Romb (9) 358th Bombardment (Squadron)

PERSONNEL (Last name first) AIR FORCE OR COMMAND PERSONNEL RATING SERIAL NO. RANK BRANCH 0/(10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (18) (17) P P STUESMER, JOHN W. P lat Lt. 0-802157 2C-1 0/ ...AC 8th AF Fatal REYNOLDS, CHARLES E. 2md Lt. 20-1 0/ AC 0-740922 8th AF Fatal 4 5 N TIELMAN, WILLIAM A. 2md Lt. 2C-1 0/ AC 0-808183 8th AF Fatal B NEWMAN, CLYDE D. 2md Lt. 0-686120 B 8th AF >B 2E-1 20 AC HAPRIS, DAVID %. 35638585 T/SEt. 8th AF MURRAY, EDWARD F. 11043735 / R S/SEt. 8th AF JG. 2B-1 20 AC MILLER, DAVID I. 11111894 12 Sgt. 8th AF 4 G STARK, JOSEPH 2B-1-0 AC 32460533 Fatal 5 S/Sgt. 8th AF 2B-1 70 AC d G COLLINS, MARVIN B. 34506470 S/SEt. 8th AF Fatal y Ja CARROLL, MARVIN W. 2E-1-20 AC 15333651 ... Sgt. 8th AF

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT (Middle initial) (21) 0-302157 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 2C-1 (24) AC (Berhal number) (Frank) (Personnel clars) (26) STUERMER, JOHN (26) 303rd Benb. (27) 358th Bembardment. (28) AAF 107 2162 Assigned (25) 8th AF

(30) 303rd Ramb (31) 358th Bembardment (32) AAF 107 2/62 Attached for flying (29) 8th AF

Original rating (33) Pilet (34) Apr. 20, 43Present rating (35) Pilet (36) Apr. 20, 43 Instrument rating (37) Aug. 30, 1943 (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS: (at the time of this accident) 5,00 283:35 (38) This type..... (42) Instrument time last 6 months.....

1,00 (43) Instrument time last 30 days. 124:45 (40) Last 90 days ... (44) Night time last 6 months..... 50:40 301 145 (45) Night time last 30 days..... 2:00 (41) Total..... AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

79:55

N 5 N 5 (50) Weather at the time of accident ... Visibility 1,800 YDS with snew Coiling 2,500 feet, with top of 6,000 feet. Clauds 7/10 to 8/10.

Expladed in Wreck.

(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS

Complete Wreck - 12X500 LB Bombs in Aircraft.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident

(58) NO FORM 54 SUBMITTED

RESTRICTED

-98757 -D

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

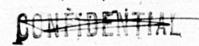
- 1. Melesworth and Graften Underwood were in the process of forming Groups for a Combat Mission and each was circling his own field assembling. The two patterns everlap and as in the case of most assemblies the Group Leaders have to maneuver semewhat to avoid other Groups. Our Leader steepened his turn to avoid collision and the other Group Leader apparently didn't act seen enough and at last possible mement tried to dive under our formation, his top man striking our second element leader of the lead squadren and shearing off his tail section. Our ship went in a dive to the ground and expleded; Grafton's A/C spinning in and exploding.
- 2. Fields are tee clase tegether to avoid everlapping patterns to a certain degree and Group Leaders and Pilots' are to be instructed to de vielent maneuvering in order to avoid the possibility of a mid air collision.

Colenel. AC.

	£ .55 le
Signature	(Investigating Officer)
	LEWIS E. LYLE,
	It. Col., AC.
	Sup & Millell
	7
	KIRK R. MITCHELL.

Date ... 1 March, 1944

Major.



STATEMENT

On assembly for the mission of 22 February, 1944 I, as Tail-Gunner on the Lead ship, witnessed the collision of Lt. John W. Stuermer's aircraft 42-38041 with another from the High Squadron of smother Group. Our Squadron was in the process of forming with the Lead element already formed. The second element was trailing and almost to the point of joining the formation. I noticed the other Group coming insat approximately 2:30 o'clock and on a collision course. Our plane was in a turn at the time and I noticed that my pilot increased the steepness in order to avoid the other aircraft, but the other Group made no noticeable effort to turn and held a straight steady course. As a result their High Squadron hit our second element. Lt. Stuermer's ship was hit just aft of the main entrance door and the Tail was sheered off. He immediatley went into a dive and the other ship went into a spin.

Temais W. Stender

FRANCIS H. STREDER, 35431880 S/Sgt. 358th Bomb Sq (H)

CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT

1 March, 1944.

- 1. On the morning of 22 February, 1944 while our Group was circling the field, assembling above the overcast, I noticed another Group at 2 0 clock at our altitude on a collision course with us.
- 2. I was flying #3 position in the Lead Squadron and had just switched to interphone to ask who had taken over the 2nd element lead as #4 had failed to take-off. 1st Lt. John W. Stuermer in #6 had to move up to #4 position. I had kept tabs on the other Group and as we circled, they made no attempt to gain or lose altitude or vary their course. My leader had steepened his turn to get away from them assuming that they in turn would turn to the left and avoid us. At the last minute they started a dive to avoid collision and my Tail Gunner warned me that they were going to be very close. He then told me that an aircraft of the other Group had hit Lt. Stuermer's ship, shearing the entire fail assembly off. Lt. Stuermer's ship nosed up, then dived down. I saw his ship just after he was hit, at seven o'clock. The other ship spun in.

JOE R. WORTHDAY,, Ist Lt., Air Corps,

CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT

At approximately 0930 hours, 22 February, 1944, as we were watching assembly procedure, I saw an aircraft plunge from an altitude of about 5-7000 feet with part of it's tail section apparently gone. Others in the tower reported seeing two aircraft falling. This was in the general direction of Chelveston-about 235°, 8 miles.

Our crash tender was immediately dispatched. A call was placed to Chelveston Flying Control who informed us that they had already sent ambulances. Our ambulances were ordered to standby. First Division was informed and they asked that we send one ambulance to the scene. We complied. The position WL 4189 was given to us by First Division. Chelveston stated that they had notified their Ordnance Section. Our Ordnance Section was also notified.

At 0948 we were informed by 358th Operations that one of the aircraft was theirs--041, Lt. Stuermer. A gunner who bailed out had just telephoned his Squadron. This information was passed to Group Operations and First Division. Division then reported that the other aircraft was from Grafton Underwood. Division also had reports that two or three other chutes had been seen.

About 1015 Grafton Underwood called and asked if we had taken Crash Action. We replied in the affirmative. They stated that the Bombardier and Navigator from their aircraft were safe. Arrangements were made for Chelveston to supply guards for the scene of the accident.

At approximately 2130 hours, two men from our Crash Crew who had been on the scene most of the day reported that when they left(about 2030 hours) seven bodies (Grafton Underwood) had not been removed from the area. Grafton Underwood was informed of the matter.

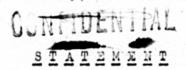
ROBERT L. JOHNSON, 2nd Lieut., Air Corps, Flying Control Officer.

CUNFIDENTIAL

Statement of Witness to B-17 Mid-Air Collision 22 February, 1944, Near Station No. 107.

At approximately 0930 hours on the 22nd of February, 1944 my attention was called to a B-17 A/C at about 9,000 feet approximately 12 miles southwest of Station No. 107. This A/C was going almost straight up when I noticed it. It then apparently stalled and started to spin down. At this point I also noticed another B-17 a few hundred feet below the first mentioned A/C, also spinning down. I watched both A/C spin earthward until they passed behind a cloud. They appeared again, beneath the cloud, and struck the earth sending up large columns of smoke. I assumed at the time that s mid-air collision had occured, and this later developed to be true.

LOUIS M. SCHULSTAD, Captain, AC.

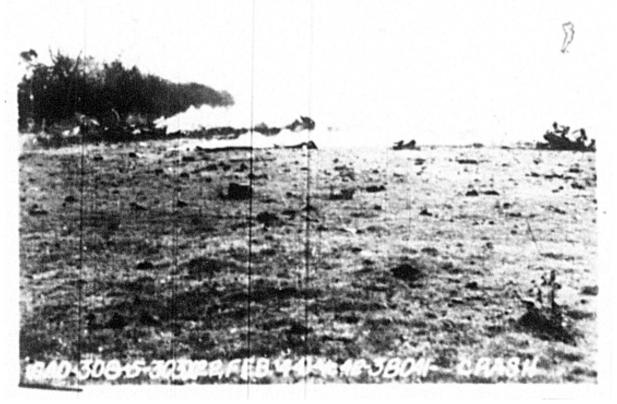


1 March, 1944.

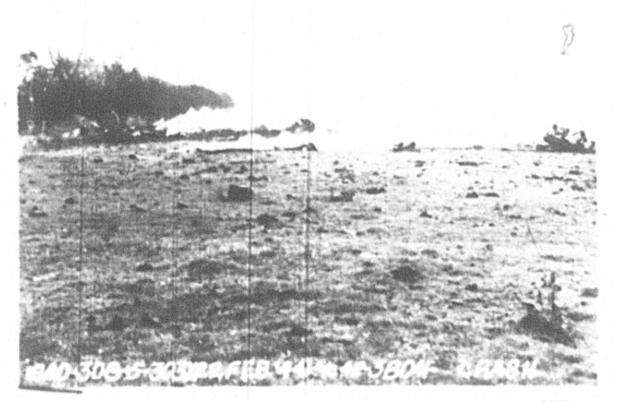
- 1. On 22 February, 1944, about 0935 hours, we were forming the Group for a mission. We were at 9,000 feet, about two miles north-northeast of AAF Station 107 with three airplanes in formation and three more coming up. We started a one half needle width turn to the left and were about on a heading of 180°, and about one half way through our turn when I looked across the cockpit and saw a formation of aircraft approaching on a collision course. I steepened the turn in an effort to clear my formation and to make it easier for the aircraft in the other formation to clear us. If he had-made a 15 to 20 degree turn to the left he would have cleared. Instead he dived and in so doing he ran his high squadron through the three trailing aircraft in my formation.
- 2. One of these aircraft colided with ship number 42-35041, piloted by Lt. JOHN W. STUERMER, shearing his tail off. Lt. STUERMER was in a bank at the time and did not see the other aircraft. When his tail had been sheared off (just at the rear entrance door) he went straight into the ground in a dive. The other aircraft went down in a spin. One man escaped from the aircraft flown by Lt. STUERMER.

Major, Air Corps.













19-309-3305)29 FFB THE NISON OF ICH

1611 300-1-303)(22, F68'44) NA2-38041-CRASH

247-303-3303)EP FEB THE X15 ... CANA

(GAD 300-1-303)(28, FE8'44) 4642-38041-CRASH

247-3 3-3305720 FFB TAX 15- 7134

(GA) 300-1-303)(BR, FE8'44) NA2-38041-CRASH

CONFIDENTIAL

360.33 lst Wrapper Ind. E-JJ-4 Hq. Eighth Air Force, APO 634, c/o Postmaster, New York, N.Y.1 MAR 1944

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

1. Transmitted herewith WDAAF Forms No. 14 and allied papers on the following aircraft accidents:

- a. 1st Lt. John W. Stuermer, B-17G number 42-38041.
- b. 2nd Lt. John W. Banks, B-24H number 52196.
- c. F/O Kelley R. Moutray, P-51B number 43-6840.
- 2. Concur.

For the Commanding General:

MEEDIE W. HOBBS.

A.G.U., Ass. t. Adjutant General.

3 Incls:

As above.