

Accident No.

44-222-511

Date

Checked by

RM

4-10-44

Analyzed by

RA

4-12-44

Copied for Wright

Field by

Notes

RA-

1225:9-43

Accident No.

Pilot's Name

0/ Nature Group Collision in full
0/ Specific Nature flight with other aircraft
6/ Underlying Nature General
40% 0/ Cause Group failed to advise an
unobstructed path
39 Specific Cause Supervisory
49 Underlying Cause Flight leader
(Major Harris)
Carelessness

60% 0/ Cause Group Supervisory
39 Specific Cause Flight leader of
second element
49 Underlying Cause Carelessness

Zero cause to
both of these planes.

RESTRICTED

SECRET

WAR DEPARTMENT

U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

BY AUTHORITY OF

DATE

19 June 43

BY

01 001

ACCIDENT No.

2 Plane

44-2-22-5-11

(1) Place Seven (7) miles SE of Grafton Underwoods Date 22 February, 1944 (3) Time 0930

AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17G (5) A. F. No. 42-31516 (6) Station AAF 106

Organization: (7) VIII (8) 384th Bomb (H) (9) 546th Bomb (H) (10) 2354

(Command and Air Force)

(Group)

(Squadron)

PERSONNEL

DUTY (10)	NAME (Last name first) (11)	RATING (12)	SERIAL No. (13)	RANK (14)	PERSONNEL CLASS (15)	BRANCH (16)	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND (17)	RESULT PERSONNEL (18)	REMARKS (19)
P	Jeter, Sydney R.	P	0-795754	1st Lt.	01	AC	VIII	Fatal	None
CP	Schultz, George F.	P	0-680733	2nd Lt.	01	AC	VIII	Fatal	None
N	Bailey, William E.	N	0-682132	2nd Lt.	01	AC	VIII	Minor	S
R	Swanson, Kenneth J.	R	0-735346	1st Lt.	01	AC	VIII	Minor	S
R	Dupuis, George E.	R	31113944	T/Sgt.	20	AC	VIII	Fatal	None
TI	MacDonald, Donald V.	TI	35391088	T/Sgt.	20	AC	VIII	Fatal	None
BT	Lisch, John R.	BT	37225434	S/Sgt.	20	AC	VIII	Fatal	None
TG	Scheffer, Edgar A.	TG	17055175	S/Sgt.	20	AC	VIII	Fatal	None
FG	Madl, Ferdinand J.	FG	33238992	S/Sgt.	20	AC	VIII	Fatal	None
FG	Persoskie, Metro (NMI)	FG	33248630	S/Sgt.	20	AC	VIII	Fatal	None

RECEIVED
HEADQUARTERS
ARMY AIR FORCE
APR 3 1944

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) Jeter Sydney R (21) 0-795754 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 01 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned (25) VIII (26) 384th Bomb (27) 546th Bomb (H) (28) AAF 106
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) VIII (30) 384th Bomb (31) 546th Bomb (H) (32) AAF 106
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 4 Jan 43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 4 Jan 43 Instrument rating (37) 21 July 43
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type 512:25 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 7:30
(39) This model 102:15 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 4:00
(40) Last 90 days 105:10 (44) Night time last 6 months 3:40
(41) Total 512:25 (45) Night time last 30 days 3:40

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE

(46) Aircraft 5
(47) Engine(s) 5
(48) Propeller(s) 5

(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS

(50) Weather at the time of accident 6/10 low clouds; visibility 3000 yards.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No.
(52) Cleared from Station 106 (53) To Combat (54) Kind of clearance Operational

(55) Pilot's mission Operational

(56) Nature of accident Mid-air collision

(57) Cause of accident The accident occurred while assembling with the 41st Combat Wing on an operational mission.

(58) Was Form 54 been submitted? No.

SECRET

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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 Lt. 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, Jr., 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 overhead; it was at this point that Lt. 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 realized 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

THOMAS P. BECKETT,
Lt. Col., Air Corps.

RAYMOND P. KETELSEN,
Major, Air Corps.

ARTHUR M. STONE, JR.,
1st Lt., Air Corps.

Date 10 March, 1944

~~SECRET~~

360.33

1st Wrapper Ind.

E-G-12

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:

Meade W. Fieber

MEADE W. FIEBER
Major, A.G.C.
Asst. Adjutant General

4 Incls:

As above.

~~SECRET~~

CONFIDENTIAL

WAR DEPARTMENT
A. A. F. Form No. 14
(Revised May 15, 1942)

ACCIDENT No. Two Plans
44-2-22-510

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

(1) Place 3 1/2 mi. SW of Raunds, Northants (2) Date 22 February, 1944 (3) Time 0932
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17G (5) A. F. No. 42-38041 (6) Station AAF 107
Organization: (7) 8th AF (8) 303rd Bomb (9) 358th Bombardment
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

DUTY (10)	NAME (Last name first) (11)	RATING (12)	SERIAL NO. (13)	RANK (14)	PERSONNEL CLASS (15)	BRANCH (16)	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND (17)	RESULT TO PERSONNEL (18)	USE OF PARACHUTE (19)
P	STUEBBER, JOHN W.	P	0-802157	1st Lt.	2C-1	AC	8th AF	Fatal	
CP	REYNOLDS, CHARLES E.	P	0-740922	2nd Lt.	2C-1	AC	8th AF	Fatal	
N	TIELMAN, WILLIAM A.	N	0-808183	2nd Lt.	2C-1	AC	8th AF	Fatal	
B	NEWMAN, CLYDE D.	B	0-686120	2nd Lt.	2C-1	AC	8th AF	Fatal	
E	HAPRIS, DAVID W.	E	35638595	T/Sgt.	2E-1	AC	8th AF	Fatal	
R	MURRAY, EDWARD F.	R	11043735	S/Sgt.	2E-1	AC	8th AF	Fatal	
G	MILLER, DAVID I.	G	11111894	Sgt.	2E-1	AC	8th AF	None	
G	STARK, JOSEPH	G	32460533	S/Sgt.	2E-1	AC	8th AF	Fatal	
G	COLLINS, MARVIN B.	G	34506470	S/Sgt.	2E-1	AC	8th AF	Fatal	
G	CARROLL, MARVIN W.	G	15333651	Sgt.	2E-1	AC	8th AF	Fatal	

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) STUEBBER, JOHN W. (21) 0-802157 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 2C-1 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned (25) 8th AF (26) 303rd Bomb (27) 358th Bombardment (28) AAF 107
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) 8th AF (30) 303rd Bomb (31) 358th Bombardment (32) AAF 107
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) Apr. 20, 43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) Apr. 20, 43 Instrument rating (37) Aug. 30, 1943
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type	283:35	(42) Instrument time last 6 months	5:00
(39) This model	79:55	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	1:00
(40) Last 90 days	124:45	(44) Night time last 6 months	50:40
(41) Total	301:45	(45) Night time last 30 days	2:00

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(19) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft	W 5 W 5 W 5 W 5 Complete Wreck - 12X500 LB Bombs in Aircraft.
(47) Engine(s)	W 5 W 5 W 5 W 5 Exploded in Wreck.
(48) Propeller(s)	W 5 W 5 W 5 W 5

(50) Weather at the time of accident Visibility 1,800 YDS with snow, Ceiling 2,500 feet, with top of 6,000 feet. Clouds 7/10 to 8/10.

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

(52) Cleared from AAF 107 (53) To AAF 107 (54) Kind of clearance Contact

(55) Pilot's mission Combat Mission

(56) Nature of accident Mid Air Collision

(57) Cause of accident Gp. Leader flew formation too close

(58) **NO FORM 54 SUBMITTED**

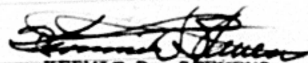
RESTRICTED

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

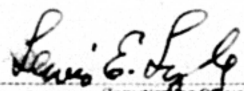
(Brief narrative of accident. Include statement of responsibility and recommendations for action to prevent repetition)

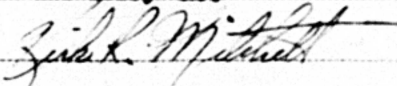
1. Molesworth and Grafton Underwood were in the process of forming Groups for a Combat Mission and each was circling his own field assembling. The two patterns overlap and as in the case of most assemblies the Group Leaders have to maneuver somewhat to avoid other Groups. Our Leader steepened his turn to avoid collision and the other Group Leader apparently didn't act soon enough and at last possible moment tried to dive under our formation, his top man striking our second element leader of the lead squadron and shearing off his tail section. Our ship went in a dive to the ground and exploded; Grafton's A/C spinning in and exploding.

2. Fields are too close together to avoid overlapping patterns to a certain degree and Group Leaders and Pilots are to be instructed to do violent maneuvering in order to avoid the possibility of a mid air collision.


KERMIT D. STEVENS,
Colonel, AC.

Signature


(Investigating Officer)
LEWIS E. KYLE,
Lt. Col., AC.


KIRK R. MITCHELL,
Major, AC.

Date 1 March, 1944

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S T A T E M E N T

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 another 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 in at 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 immediately went into a dive and the other ship went into a spin.

Francis H. Stender

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

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

#5

CONFIDENTIAL
S T A T E M E N T

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 O'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 tail 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. Worthy
JOE R. WORTHY.,
1st Lt., Air Corps,

CONFIDENTIAL

#6

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STATEMENT

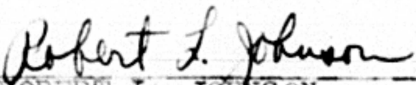
At approximately 0930 hours, 22 February, 1944, as we were watching assembly procedure, I saw an aircraft plunge from an altitude of about 5-7000 feet with part of it's tail section apparently gone. Others in the tower reported seeing two aircraft falling. This was in the general direction of Chelveston--about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


~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

#2

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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 a mid-air collision had occurred, and this later developed to be true.


LOUIS M. SCHULSTAD,
Captain, AC.

#3'
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
STATEMENT

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 collided with ship number 42-38041, piloted by Lt. JOHN W. STUERMEER, shearing his tail off. Lt. STUERMEER 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. STUERMEER.

Kirk R. Mitchell
KIRK R. MITCHELL,
Major, Air Corps.

#4
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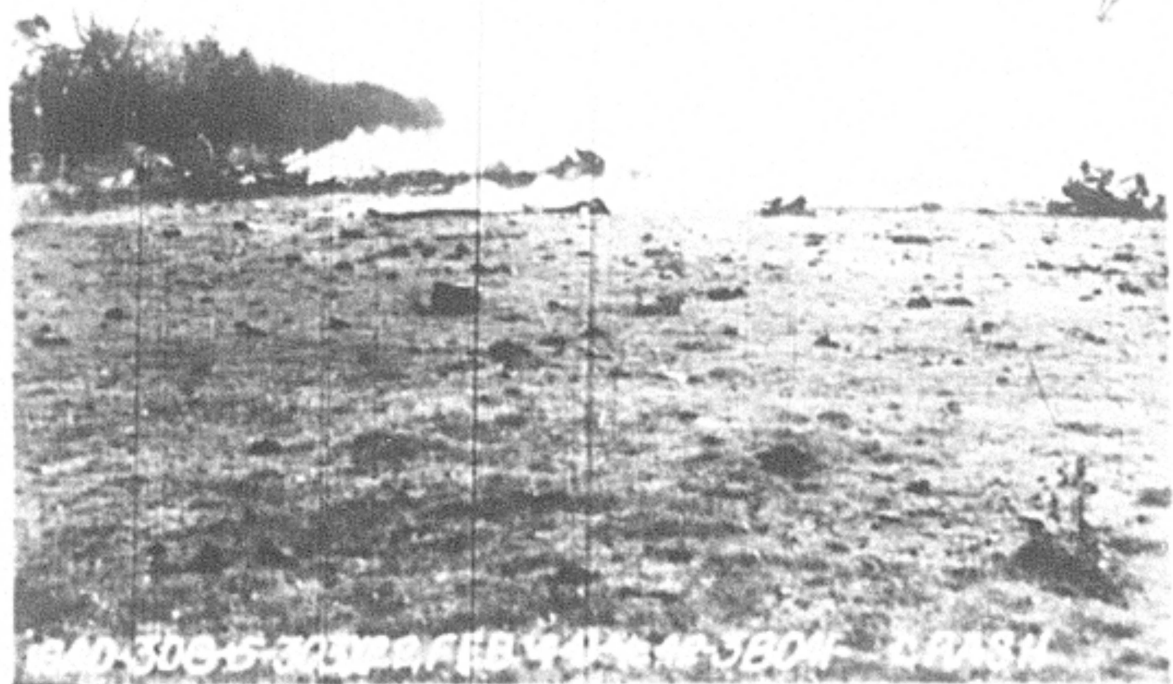
140 3086-3022 FEB 44 4-38041-BOMB CRATER



140 3086-3022 FEB 44 4-38041-CRASH



3AD 3096-3022 FEB 44-4-38041-BOMB CRATER



3AD 3096-3022 FEB 44-4-38041-BOMB CRATER



340-309-5-3022 FEB 40 - 38041-BOMB CRATER



340-309-5-3022 FEB 40 - 38041-BOMB CRATER







(G40-303-3303)22 FEB 44) 4238041-CRASH



(G40-303-1303)22 FEB 44) 4238041-CRASH

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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:

Meddie W. Hobbs
MEDDIE W. HOBBS,
Major, A.G.O.,
Asst. Adjutant General.

3 Incls:.

As above.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~