

Accident No.

44-5-29-5-11

Date

6-20-44

Checked by

JM

Analyzed by

Copied for Wright

Field by

Notes

12259-43

WAR DEPARTMENT  
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

ACCIDENT No. 2180  
44-524-510

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place WM 6043 (2) Date 23 Mar 1944 (3) Time 0635  
 AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-24 J-10 (5) A. F. No. 42-110172 (6) Station AAF 123  
 Organization: (7) 8th AF (8) 458th (9) 754th  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) 2180

PERSONNEL DH

DUITY	NAME (Last name first)	RAVING	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	BARTON, KENNETH C.	P	0-662831	1ST LT	1092	AC	8th	KIA	NO
CP	FUGA, WILLIAM J. R.	CP	0-817192	2D LT	1092	AC	8th	KIA	NO
N	NOBLITT, CHARLES G.	N	0-811874	2D LT	1034	AC	8th	KIA	NO
B	CAMPBELL, JR., PRESTON W.	B	0-747977	2D LT	1035	AC	8th	KIA	NO
E	LEONARD, JR., CHARLES A.	E	11094982	S/SPT	748	AC	8th	KIA	NO
RO	TORKELSON, ROY A.	RO	19070665	S/SPT	757	AC	8th	KIA	NO
G	LARREE, CARROLL J.	G	31325501	S/SPT	612	AC	8th	KIA	NO
G	MC GLOTH, HAROLD R.	G	15076042	S/SPT	748	AC	8th	KIA	NO
G	HALSTED, MAYNARD T.	G	17155618	S/SPT	612	AC	8th	KIA	NO
G	ATNOLD, RICHARD E.	G	15116810	S/SPT	748	AC	8th	KIA	NO

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) BARTON KENNETH C. (21) 0-662831 (22) 1ST LT (23) 1092 (24) AC  
 (Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)  
 Assigned (25) 8th (26) 458th (27) 754th (28) AAF 123  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Attached for flying (29) same (30) same (31) same (32) 2180  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 6 Sep 42 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) same Instrument rating (37) same  
 (Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date)

First Pilot Hours:

(at the time of this accident)  
 (38) This type 434:10 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 30:50  
 (39) This model 18:45 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 14:35  
 (40) Last 90 days 100:00 (44) Night time last 6 months 2:00  
 (41) Total 1133:10 (45) Night time last 30 days 2:00

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE FIRE

DAMAGE	(46) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>W 5</u>	Completely burned following crash.
(47) Engine(s) <u>W 5 W 5 W 5 W 5</u>	
(48) Propeller(s) <u>W 5 W 5 W 5 W 5</u>	

(49) Weather at the time of accident: (4) miles visibility - 2500 ft. ceiling - Stratus Cumulus  
 Wind direction "North" (Surface) - Velocity 5 miles ph.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident NO  
 (52) Cleared from AAF 123 (53) To AAF 123 TO CONFIDENTIAL  
 (54) Pilot's mission Combat 05 2180 BY AUTHORITY OF CG AAF  
F. C. A. DATE 2-8-46  
 (55) Nature of accident Collision in full flight with other aircraft.

(57) Cause of accident A formation of B-17's and B-24's approached each other on a collision course at the same altitude (13,000 ft) with restricted vision.

RESTRICTED

CONFIDENTIAL

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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

(Brief narrative of accident. Include statement of responsibility and recommendations for action to prevent repetition)  
 No Form #54 has been submitted.

from witnesses' statements the following narrative is established. The B-24 group was formed at 13,000 feet and flying a course of approximately 252 degrees. The B-17 group was formed at 13,000 feet also and flying a course of 320 degrees. When first sighted by the B-24 formation, the B-17's were ahead and to the left on the course indicated. They could not change altitude either up or down, or turn either direction fast enough to clear the two formations. The B-17's continued their course and a collision resulted between one ship from each formation.

The visibility was six (6) to eight (8) miles in haze according to one witness, which does not allow much time for maneuvering a large formation under the circumstances described.

EXHIBITS:

- A - Convening authority SO #27, par #16, Sta 134, dd 12 May 1944.
- B - Witnesses' Statement.
- C - Witnesses' Statement.
- D - Witnesses' Statement.
- E - Witnesses' Statement.
- F - Flying Control Officer's Statement.
- G - Photographs.



*B. S. Batson*

Signature **B. S. BATSON**, Lt. Col., AC President.  
 (Investigating Officer)

*Ray J. Will*  
**RAY J. WILL**, Lt. Col., AC Accident Off.

*Henry D. Peterson*  
**HENRY D. PETERSON**, Maj. AC Member

*William C. Cochran*  
**WILLIAM C. COCHRAN**, Capt. AC Recorder

Date 30 May 1944

# CONFIDENTIAL

## STATEMENT

of

FRANK E. WRIGHT, Captain, AG, 754th Bombardment Squadron (H), 458th Bombardment Group (H), AAF 123, APO 558.

Location: 5219-0102 E Time: 0653 Our Course: 252 Their Course: 280-320 Altitude: 13000 Feet.

The 458th Group was flying the high right squadron on the 467th Group's lead squadron. The accident occurred at 0653. The Wing had assembled and was on course of 252 degrees magnetic when the lead group of B-17's were noticed approaching from the left at the same altitude of 13000 feet on a collision course.

The visibility at the time was restricted to an estimated 6 to 8 miles by haze. Clouds formed a 10/10 undercast at approximately 8000 feet. When first discovered approaching in a slight left turn on an estimated course of from 280 degrees to 310 degrees and it was impossible to maneuver our formation in any direction to avoid the impending collision course. An upward or downward maneuver would merely have resulted in entanglement of the two formations high or low elements. A right turn away would merely have killed all vision by any aircraft in our formation to the approaching B-17's and would not have taken our formation out of their paths.

The oncoming aircraft appeared to be holding steady to their altitude so as a last resort we dived below the aircraft flying directly toward our own. We barely passed under these planes and then pulled up rapidly to avoid the lower planes in the B-17 formation.

At this time a diagram of the situation would appear thus:



The following moments were consumed by a wild scramble of planes passing through each other's formation and the re-forming of our original formation.

Looking back to the right I observed the two aircraft which had collided spiralling earthward. The B-24 appeared to be ruptured in the mid-fuselage section. The B-17 had lost a wing and had a hole in the fuselage.

*Frank E. Wright*  
FRANK E. WRIGHT  
Captain.

# CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

STATEMENT  
of

First Lieutenant ALFRED C. BRAUER, O-659234, Air Corps, 754th Bombardment Squadron, AAF 123, APO 558.

We were flying at approximately 13000 feet when I saw a group of B-17s come in at our altitude and on a 90 degree course from ours. One B-17 ran into Lt BARTON's plane at the rear Bomb-bay and tore his plane half in two. At the time I saw the crash it appeared that the B-17 exploded and tore Lt BARTON's plane in two at the same time. The tail section of Lt BARTON's plane tumbled through the air and I saw no one bail out, the fore-section of the plane flipped upside down and then tumbled at the time it disappeared from my sight. I had seen no fire and no one leave the ship.

Alfred C. Brauer  
ALFRED C. BRAUER,  
1st Lt. AC.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

STATEMENT  
of

First Lieutenant ANTHONY J. DE GENNARO, O-811406, Air Corps, 754th Bombardment Squadron, AAF 129, APO 558.

Position plotted at time of accident was about 8 miles NE of Diss. We were lead ship, Lt BARTON on right wing flying deputy lead. We were flying on course of 250 degrees magnetic when spearhead of group of B-17s approached in collision course flying on course of approximately 320 degrees or 340 degrees magnetic. Had they stayed at altitude they were at first they could have avoided us but for some reason they dove. One B-17 was avoided by swinging nose up. We missed him by approximately 50 to 75 feet but he collided with deputy lead ship. B-24 immediately broke in half in vicinity of bulkhead at waist and bomb-bay. The forward part hung in the air momentarily then plunged earthward. No chutes were seen by crew 41. The B-17 after collision was thrown upward and turned on it's back, then spun through the clouds. It did not come apart, but parts were falling off on way down. No chutes were seen. Time was 0653.

Anthony J. De Gennaro  
ANTHONY J. DE GENNARO,  
1st Lt, AC.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

# CONFIDENTIAL

## STATEMENT of

First Lieutenant CHARLES B. PETERS, O-1295479, Air Corps, 754th  
Bombardment Squadron, AAF Station 123, APO 558.

"As our formation was heading for the coast, a formation of B-17s approached our formation from a 11 o'clock position and seemed to turn directly into our formation. (I was riding the nose turret of our ship 163 which was flying in #3 position of the lead element of the lead section.) As the B-17s turned into our formation I noticed that our formation broke up. Lt BARTON who was flying #2 position of the lead element dropped back and down, and a few seconds later a B-17 hit Lt BARTON's ship at the left waist window. There was a large flash of flame or an explosion and the tail portion of Lt. BARTON's ship was cut off and both parts of the ship dropped down into the clouds. I did not see what happened to the B-17 after it hit the B-24, as it dropped back out of sight.

*Charles B. Peters*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHARLES B. PETERS,  
1st Lt, AC.

CONFIDENTIAL

FLYING CONTROL  
AAF STATION 134  
APO 559

24 May 1944.

SUBJECT: Accident Report.

TO : Commanding Officer, 490th Bomb Group, APO 559, U.S. Army.

1. At 0645 hours, 23 May 1944, Duty Officer heard noise as if aircraft was diving. Officer looked east from Control Tower and observed two aircraft plunge through the overcast.

2. The first, a B-24, fell behind a clump of trees in WM 6093. A few moments later several explosions were heard and smoke was seen to rise. Next, the B-17, fell in WM 6193. Smoke was seen to rise, but no explosions were heard.

3. Dispensary, Fire House, Military Police, Ordnance Office, and Photo Sections were notified. Attempt was made to contact the Commanding Officer and the Air Inspector. Third Bomb Division Flying Control was notified.

4. Upon being relieved, Duty officer proceeded to the scene of crashes. One aircraft, the B-17, was identified as No. 297325, letter "H", 351st Bomb Group. The B-24 was identified as No. 42-110172, letter "D", 458th Bomb Group.

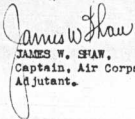
5. Three crew members parachuted from the B-17, none escaped from the B-24.

6. Civilian damage, to best of Officers knowledge was confined to burned areas in open fields.

7. Full telephone report was rendered to 3rd Bomb Division Flying Control.

/s/ Henry M. Lewter, Jr..  
/t/ HENRY M. LEWTER, JR.,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps,  
Flying Control Officer.

A TRUE COPY:

  
JAMES W. SHAW,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
Adjutant.



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

(1) Place AAF STATION 110 (2) Date 23 MAY, 1944 (3) Time 0655  
 AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17G 040 (5) A. F. No. 42-97325 (6) Station 110  
 (7) Organization: (7) 8th (8) 351 (9) 508 (Squadron) 2511  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

DVT	NAME (Last name first)	RATING (18)	SERIAL NO. (15)	RANK (14)	PERSONNEL CLASS (15)	BRANCH (16)	AIR FORCE OR COUNCIL (17)	KNOWLEDGE TO PERSONNEL (18)	USE OF PARACHUTE (19)
	Crowe, Peter E.	P	0-754326	1st Lt.	18 01	AC	8	Fatal	No
	CP Nelson, Morris H.	P	0-745157	1st Lt.	18 01	AC	8	Fatal	No
	H Ransath, Robert A.	O	0-689658	2nd Lt.	18 01	AC	8	Fatal	No
	B Rubin, Frank (WMI)	O	0-673810	2nd Lt.	18 01	AC	8	Fatal	No
	TT Fishburne, Gerald W.	O	16190766	T/Sgt.	20	AC	8	Fatal	No
	BO Popp, Theodore W.	BO	37213280	T/Sgt.	38 20	AC	8	None	Yes
	WJ Duggan, Joseph T.	G	11050365	S/Sgt.	20	AC	8	Severe	Yes
	HT Harden, Edwin G.	G	16088146	S/Sgt.	20	AC	8	None	Yes
	YG Lopez, Frank T.	G	18070985	S/Sgt.	20	AC	8	Fatal	No

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of Aircraft  
PILOT Peter E. Crowe

(20) Peter E. (Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (21) 0-754326 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 18 (24) AC  
 Assigned (25) 8th (26) 351 (27) 508 (28) 110  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Attached for flying (29) 8th (30) 351 (31) 508 (32) 110  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Original rating (33) P (34) 30 Aug/43 Present rating (35) P (36) 30 Aug/43 Instrument rating (37) 3 Jan., 1944  
 (Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

First PILOT Hours:

(38) This type 382:05 (43) Instrument time last 6 months 27:35  
 (39) This model 89:00 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 1:35  
 (40) Last 90 days 86:30 (44) Night time last 6 months 20:10  
 (41) Total 382:05 (44) Night time last 30 days None

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE Fire

DAMAGE	(46) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>5</u>	<u>A/C Completely Demolished Upon Impact in Vicinity of RTE.</u>
(47) Engine(s) <u>5 5 5 5</u>	
(48) Propeller(s) <u>5 5 5 5</u>	

(49) Weather at the time of accident Undercast  
 (51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No  
 (52) Cleared from Station 110 (53) To Combat (54) Kind of clearance 2511  
 (55) Pilot's mission Combat (Operational)

(56) Nature of accident Mid-air collision with a B-24 at 12,000 feet causing loss of two engines and possibly a wing panel which put the A/C into an uncontrollable dive.

(57) Cause of accident Collision between B-17 and B-24 as a result of a collision course of a Combat Wing of B-17's and a Group of B-24's which approached the formation from the right, out of the sun.

(58) Form 54 has not been submitted.





WINGMAN-195123-5-44 (B-17 CRASH)

## DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

The Lead Box of which Lt. Crowe was leading the Low Squadron, was in a left hand circle around Splasher #6. As it turned to a northerly heading, one group of B-24's passed in front on a West heading. These were avoided by crossing behind the B-24's. A second group of B-24's approaching from the East failed to turn in time and when it finally became aware of the B-17 groups directly ahead, it attempted a turn to the right in order to parallel the B-17's. This manoeuvre began too late and both formations shuffled.

It is believed that the leader of the second box of B-24's could have avoided this condition by turning to the left and crossing behind the B-17 formation. Also, since the B-17's had just turned away from the sun, the responsibility fell upon the B-24 formation which had its back to the sun.

Recommendations are that B-24's be assigned different assembly area's, that greater coordination between Division on assembly be achieved, and that the common complaint of B-24's failing to make sufficient evasive manoeuvres be brought to the attention of higher Headquarters.

BY	STVOS	B	CA	OS	OS	OS	OS	OS	OS
BY	STVOS	B	CA	OS	OS	OS	OS	OS	OS
BY	STVOS	B	CA	OS	OS	OS	OS	OS	OS
BY	STVOS	B	CA	OS	OS	OS	OS	OS	OS



Signature

*Clinton F. Ball*  
 CLINTON F. BALL, Lt. Col., AC.

*Robert W. Burns*  
 ROBERT W. BURNS, Lt. Col., AC.

*Kenneth L. Dorr*  
 KENNETH L. DORR, Lt. Col., AC.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

No 505 USAPP/6-43/15W/10409



(GM-80-8-95)23-5-44(B-17 CRASH)