

522

Accident No. 45-26-522

Date 3-15-45

Checked by LMB

Analyzed by _____

Copied for Wright
Field by _____

Notes _____

FD-302 (Rev. 3-22-64)

NAME Ruff, John (Civilian)

AIR FORCE & COM. _____

GROUP NO. _____

GROUP TYPE _____

AIRCRAFT CODE 9

371013-44-075

CONFIDENTIAL
RESTRICTED
WAR DEPARTMENT

CONFIDENTIAL
ACCIDENT No.

U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

3-3-45 Y3370
01-001

(1) Place - AAF Station 130 (2) Date 6 February 1945 (3) Time 1620
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17C DOY (5) A. F. No. 44-8720 (6) Station AAF 130
Organization: (7) 8th AF (8) 457th BH (9) 750th Bomb. Squadron (H)
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

DUTY	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	DOHERTY, WILLIAM K.	P.	0-411162	Major	18	AC	8th AF	Fatal	None
Eng	KERR, ROY C.		0-862185	Capt.	38 (3)	AC	8th AF	Fatal	None
B	WALBRIDGE, MAURICE E.	B	0-773020	1st Lt.	18	AC	8th AF	Fatal	None
RO	Stevenson, Robert L.		32383946	S/Sgt	38	AC	8th AF	Fatal	None
#	Ruff, John (Civilian)		Shop Street, Holme, Hunts.		5			Major	3

PERSONNEL DATA

(20) DOHERTY WILLIAM K. (21) 0-411162 (22) Major (23) 18 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)

Assigned (25) 8th AF (26) 457th BH (27) 750th (28) AAF 130
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)

Attached for flying (29) 8th AF (30) 457th (31) 750th (32) AAF 130
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)

Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 29 July '43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 29 July '43 Instrument rating (37) 9 Sept '44
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:
(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type B-17 734:50 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 13:00
(39) This model B-17C 66:35 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 3:00
(40) Last 90 days 66:35 (44) Night time last 6 months 4:00
(41) Total 1210:05 (45) Night time last 30 days 0:00

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(40) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>W</u>	Complete destruction.
(47) Engine(s) <u>W</u> <u>W</u> <u>W</u> <u>W</u>	Complete destruction.
(48) Propeller(s) <u>W</u> <u>W</u> <u>W</u> <u>W</u>	Complete destruction.

(50) Weather at the time of accident Visibility - 1100 yards. Clouds - 10/10 at 300 feet.
Wind - South at 12 mph.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No.
(52) Cleared from AAF Station 130 (53) To AAF Station 130. (54) Kind of clearance Local

(55) Pilot's mission Test hop of a new aircraft.
CLASSIFICATION, CANCELLED, OR CHANGED, TO

(56) Nature of accident Landing Accident.
BY AUTHORITY OF C. L. Davis DATE 1-5-46

(57) Cause of accident Pilot over shot last turn into field and in attempting to turn back into the runway, stalled at too low an altitude to affect a recovery.

(58) Form 54 not submitted.

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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

Description: At 1620 hours, 6 February 1945, Major WILLIAM K. DOHERTY, in aircraft # MH-8720, at the completion of a local test flight, was attempting to land. Having to go around on first attempt due to other aircraft in the traffic pattern, he circled the field at 200 feet using a close-in pattern. On the final approach, the aircraft was not lined up with the landing runway, and it is assumed that the pilot stalled out of a steep turn in attempting to line up. The stall occurred at too low an altitude to affect a recovery.

Responsibility: The responsibility for this accident is attributed 100% to pilot error, however it is felt that the weather was a contributing factor in that it necessitated a close-in low altitude traffic pattern.

Recommendation: None.

Rod L. Francis
ROD L. FRANCIS,
Lt. Col., Air Corps,
Aircraft Accident Committee.



Wilbur D. Snow
WILBUR D. SNOW,
Major, Air Corps,
Aircraft Accident Committee.

Signature

James A. Maguire
(Investigating Officer)
JAMES A. MAGUIRE,
Major, Air Corps,
Aircraft Accident Officer.

Date 14 February 1945

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HEADQUARTERS
ARMY AIR FORCE STATION 130
Office of the Flying Control Officer
APO 557, U.S. Army

(E-2-13)

7 February 1945

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident of B-17 #48-720.

TO : Operations Officer, 457th Bombardment Group, APO 557, U.S. Army.

1. Bluebell N-Nan Aircraft No. 48-720 Pilot Major William K. Doherty, O-411462 was cleared at 1450 hours Tuesday 6 Feb 1945 for a local altitude flight, E.T.R. 1700 hours. Weather conditions on take-off were contact, visibility 3500 yards, cloud base 2500 feet. Instructions were given to the pilot to stay in R/T contact with the tower. The message was acknowledged.
2. At 1520 hours Group Operations instructed the recall of Bluebell N-Nan. Bluebell N-Nan did not acknowledge the tower's R/T request to return to base. A W/T message was phoned to Polebrook Flying Control. Bluebell N-Nan was contacted by Polebrook W/T but contact was broken before the message could be sent.
3. The aircraft from the operational mission were landing on Runway 28, (wind South 5 knots per hour, visibility 1100 yards and cloud base 600 feet at 1600 hours) when an aircraft later identified as Bluebell N-Nan, at approximately 1620 hours seemed to skim the trees 1000 yards from the 28 end of the runway, dip its right wing, drop the nose, then crash to the ground. Fire and smoke commenced immediately.
4. Crash action was started at once.
5. The aerodrome was last inspected at 1230 hours 6 Feb 1945.

Stephen J. Prosen
STEPHEN J. PROSEN,
1st Lt., AG,
Flying Control Officer.

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S T A T E M E N T

The ship came over the field at not more than fifty (50) feet, diagonally to the landing runway and from the left side. Crossed 28° at this angle and went up to 150 feet with a turn to the left getting onto his downwind leg. During this turn he cut two (2) or three (3) other ships out which were in the pattern. When he began his turn from the base leg to his final approach he had an altitude of not more than 150 feet. During the turn he lost most of 100 feet. The ship was now at a 45° bank. He shallowed his bank because he began turning too soon and would not have been lined up with the runway. He flew in this bank of 20° for five (5) or ten (10) seconds, and again steepened it to a 45° bank. He was now not more than fifty (50) feet off the ground. Just before leveling out which would have him lined up perfectly, his left wing seemed to strike some object and turned the plane in a diving attitude. The ship's position at this time was nose downward, 90° perpendicular to the ground at about a height of thirty (30) feet. At this point nothing could have been done to put the ship in a flying attitude because of the low altitude. I believe that the plane's left wing hit some object while in his final bank because of the low altitude during the turn and when the left wing was dropped in the turn the wing tip was just off the ground. The ship was put into a nose downward attitude violently which could only be made by his left wing hitting some obstruction. It could not have been a stall.

Henry S. Blach
HENRY S. BLACH,
2nd Lt., Air Corps,
Pilot.

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S T A T E M E N T

The undersigned was in the Control Tower at AAF Station 130 at approximately 1620 hours on 6 January 1945 observing the return of aircraft from an operational mission. At the time the weather was poor, having about a 400 ft ceiling and about 1000 yds visibility. The aircraft were having considerable difficulty in landing. The traffic pattern was full and difficulty was being experienced in controlling the airdrome traffic.

At about 1620 hours the undersigned looked towards the touch-down end of the landing runway. An unidentified B-17 was observed turning on to the final approach at a low altitude (estimated at 200 feet). As the aircraft appeared to straighten out on the final approach its right wing began to drop and slowly continued to drop until it hit the ground. The aircraft immediately cart-wheeled, broke up and burst into flames.

Wilbur D. Snow
WILBUR D. SNOW,
Major, Air Corps.

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HEADQUARTERS
ARMY AIR FORCE STATION 130
Office of the Flying Control Officer
APO 557, U.S. Army

7 February 1945

S T A T E M E N T

Reference accident of aircraft B-17 #48 720 Bluebell N-Nan.

I was positioned at the 1000 yard magnesium site for Runway 28 when I noticed an aircraft which had turned on the final approach. The aircraft was in a very steep bank and the left wing tip appeared to be less than 50 feet from the ground. Straightening into level flight and as the aircraft approached, it seemed the pilot noticed he was too close to the trees so he banked to the left and tried to gain altitude but was unsuccessful and hit the top of one of the trees with the tip of his right wing. Control of the aircraft was lost and it nosed down, crashed, and burst into flames immediately.

Melvin R. Nicholaides
MELVIN R. NICHOLAIDES, 36737800,
Cpl, 88th. Sta Comm Sq.

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

Ship overshot runway, made very steep turn to get back. It seemed the ship stalled out in the turn and the right wing dropped hitting the trees.

Frederick L. Boatwright

FREDERICK L. BOATWRIGHT,
1st Lt., AC, O-763472,
Pilot.
(Eye Witness).

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(GAD-56-7-457)(6/2/45)(CRASH OF A/C 720)



(GAD-56-8-457)(6/2/45)(CRASH OF A/C 720)



(GAD-56-1-457)(6/2/45)(CRASH OF A/C 720)



(GAD-56-6-457)(6/2/45)(CRASH OF A/C 720)



(GAD-56-3-457)(6/2/45)(CRASH OF A/C 720)