



Accident No.

04-17-73-1

Date

Checked by

[Signature]

1-4-44

Analyzed by

[Signature]

1-5-44

Copied for Wright

Field by

Notes

Att: Lt. Col. Boynton

Parachute used

1225:9-43

Accident No.

44-12-23-1

Pilot's Name

Snow, William L.

01 Nature Group

Collision in full

22 Specific Cause

flight with other aircraft

65 Underlying Nature

While flying formation

4 Cause Group

Failed to maintain an
unobstructed path

Specific Cause

Underlying Cause

100 05 Cause Group

100% Carelessness

34 Specific Cause

17 Underlying Cause

Zero cause to
second plane

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

ACCIDENT No. 21002

44-12-23-1

(1) Place Army Air Base, Wendover Field, Utah (2) Date 12-23-43 (3) Time 1123
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17G (5) A. F. No. 42-31541 (6) Station Army Air Base, Wendover, Utah
Organization: (7) 2nd AF, 15th Wing (8) 457th Bomb (9) 748th Bombardment Squadron (H)
(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	Snow, William R.	P	0-747351	2nd Lt.	18 01	A.C.	2nd	Fatal	No
CP	Sullivan, Dwight T.	P	0-754036	2nd Lt.	18 01	A.C.	2nd	Fatal	No
N	Oberfelder, Robert F.	N	0-692059	2nd Lt.	18 01	A.C.	2nd	Fatal	No
B	Saucer, Earl F.	B	0-739222	2nd Lt.	18 01	A.C.	2nd	Fatal	No
AEG	Cummings, Vernon L.	AEG	35335171	S/Sgt.	18 20	A.C.	2nd	Fatal	No
AEG	Strong, Morris H.	AEG	19013855	Sgt.	18 20	A.C.	2nd	Fatal	No
ROG	Liesinger, Edwin A.	ROG	37461600	S/Sgt.	18 20	A.C.	2nd	Fatal	No
AG	Hanning, James A.	AG	37499511	Sgt.	18 20	A.C.	2nd	Fatal	No

RECEIVED
HEADQUARTERS
ARMY AIR FORCE

JAN 3 1944

(20) Snow, William R. (Last name) (21) 0-747351 (Social number) (22) 2nd Lt. (23) 18 (Personnel class) (24) A.C. (Branch)
Assigned (25) 2nd AF, 15th Wing (Command and Air Force) (26) 457th Bomb (Group) (27) 748th Bombardment (Squadron) (28) AAB, Wendover, Utah (Station)
Attached for flying (29) 2nd AF, 15th Wing (Command and Air Force) (30) 457th Bomb (Group) (31) 748th Bombardment (Squadron) (32) AAB, Wendover, Utah (Station)
Original rating (33) Pilot (Rating) (34) 5/20/43 (Date) Present rating (35) Pilot (Rating) (36) 5/20/43 (Date) Instrument rating (37) 11/10/43 (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type B-17 161:50 (42) Instrument time last 6 months
(39) This model B-17G 13:10 (43) Instrument time last 30 days
(40) Last 90 days 100:10 (44) Night time last 6 months
(41) Total 161:50 (45) Night time last 30 days

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(40) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>W.S.</u>	Aircraft completely demolished.
(47) Engine(s) <u>W.S. W.S. SW SW</u>	Aircraft exploded on impact.
(48) Propeller(s) <u>W.S. W.S. SW SW</u>	

(50) Weather at the time of accident Ceiling 6,500 feet. Visibility unlimited. Wind calm.

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

(52) Cleared from AAB, Wendover, Utah To Local (54) Kind of clearance Local

(55) Pilot's mission Six plane Squadron local formation training mission.

(56) Nature of accident Collision in full flight with other aircraft.

(57) Cause of accident Pilot under-ran and pulled up into other aircraft.

(58) Unsatisfactory Report Submitted: None.

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

This aircraft was in #1 position of the 2nd element of a six plane squadron local formation training mission. The formation was assembled at approximately 6000 feet altitude, for a period from three to five minutes, when the #1 aircraft of the 2nd element, B-17G Ser. No. 42-31541, Lt. William R. Snow pilot, under-ran and pulled up into #2 aircraft of 1st element B-17G Ser. No. 42-38065. The vertical stabilizer of 541 smashed into leading edge of left wing between #1 and #2 engines of 065. The propellers of #1 and #2 engines of 065 cut the tail off 541, just ahead of main entrance door. After the tail was cut off, 541 went into a steep climb, did a complete loop and plunged in a vertical dive nose down to the ground and exploded on impact. The eight crew members aboard aircraft 541 were killed instantly.

RESPONSIBILITY: 100% personnel error; specifically; errors of technique and probable carelessness of pilot. Investigation proved that pilot had proper briefing and previous experience in this type formation. (NOTE. The factor of carelessness is opinion only. Eye witnesses in other planes in formation state there was no visible indication that the plane might have been out of control.)

RECOMMENDATIONS: None: Proper briefing was completed of all crews before this flight.

Willis G. Carter

WILLIS G. CARTER,
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps, Member

Hugh D. Wallace

HUGH D. WALLACE,
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps, Member

Gordon H. Haggard

GORDON H. HAGGARD,
Major, Med. Corps, Member

Gayle W. Maile

GAYLE W. MAILE,
Captain, Air Corps, Member

Duane H. Skiles

DUANE H. SKILES,
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps, Member

John S. Chalfant

JOHN S. CHALFANT,
Major, Air Corps, Member.

Harry E. Lawrence

HARRY E. LAWRENCE,
Captain, Air Corps, Member.

Signature

Merle B. Crum

(Investigating Officer)
MERLE B. CRUM,
Captain, Air Corps,

Date 27 December 1943

12-22-43
DATE

WENDOVER AAB
STATION

457TH BOMB (H)
GROUP NO. AND TYPE

B-17G
AIRCRAFT MODEL

Sgt. Vernon L. Cummings
CREW CHIEF OR AERIAL ENGINEER

748th BOMB (H)
SQUADRON NO. AND TYPE

42-31541
AIRCRAFT SERIAL NO.

PERS. CLASS	NAME - RANK - ORGANIZATION	USE AS DIRECTED LOCALLY	ALWAYS ENTER DUTY SYMBOLS WHEN APPLICABLE. ENTER N - NIGHT OR I - INSTRUMENT. ENTER TIME FLOWN THEREUNDER							FLIGHT DATA				
			DUTY	N	O	R	I	DUTY	N	O	R	I	TERMINALS AND MISSION	NO. OF LANDINGS
18	SNOW, WILLIAM R. 2nd LT 748TH	3	P									LOCAL	10 40	
18	SULLIVAN, DWIGHT T. 2nd LT 748TH		CP										11 27	
18	OBERFELDER, ROBERT F. 2nd LT 748th		N									T		47
18	SAUCER, EARL F. 2nd LT 748TH		B											
38	CUMINGS, VERNON L. SGT. 748TH		E											
38	STRONG, MORRIS H. SGT. 748TH		AE											
38	LIESINGER, EDWIN A. SGT. 748TH		R											
38	HENNING, JAMES A. SGT. 748TH		AG											
	"A TRUE COPY"													
	<i>Wilbur D. Snow</i> WILBUR D. SNOW, 1st Lt, 457th Corp., Operations Officer.													

WAR DEPARTMENT
A. F. FORM NO. 1
2-2-42

FLIGHT REPORT - OPERATIONS

CHECKED:
LEGIBLE AND
CORRECT

OPER. CLERK

TRANSCRIBED
TOTAL FLIGHT
TIME ENTERED
ON FORM 1A

CREW CHIEF

TOTAL
FLIGHT
TIME

: 47

FLIGHT REPORT - ENGINEERING

INSPECTION STATUS				SERVING 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	12-22-43	H	Wendover													
DAILY	2-22-43	H														
25 HOURS	78:30			1ST	H	1700	-	40	-	140	-	140	-	140	-	140
50 HOURS	163:30			2ND	325	1700	-	140	-	140	-	140	-	140	-	140
100 HOURS	188:00			3RD	485	1700	4	140	12	140	4	140	-	140	-	140
				4TH												
				5TH												

INSPECTION OF AUXILIARY EQUIPMENT				STATUS TODAY		EXPLANATION
EQUIPMENT	SYMBOL	INSPECTED BY	STATION	1.	2.	
BOMBARDMENT						Latch On Landing Gear Window broken + Taped = Zipper Removed from Chin Turret
GUNNERY		Winn	Wendover			
CHEMICAL						
COMMUNICATIONS						
PHOTOGRAPHIC						EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE WHEN THE "STATUS TODAY" IS INDICATED BY A RED SYMBOL, AND AN "EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE" HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED BY AN AUTHORIZED ENGINEERING OFFICER, THE PILOT OF THE AIRCRAFT WILL SIGN THIS RELEASE BEFORE FLIGHT.
NAVIGATION		Harvey				
				RELEASED FOR FLIGHT		1. <i>[Signature]</i> 2. <i>[Signature]</i>

REMARKS - PILOTS AND MECHANICS - SEE INSTRUCTIONS INSIDE FRONT COVER.

Batteries checked OK (Harvey)
Preflight checked OK (Harvey)
Lower ball, leaks. Winn
#1 & 2 Rate of Climb indicator inaccurate
Vickers unit in ball turret leaks
Total time 3 hrs 50 min 2 landings
Inst calibration 5 Demo bombs
dropped over the snow
Removed + replaced rate of climb indicator
(Harvey)

AIRCRAFT AND ENGINE TIME RECORD (ENTER IN HOURS AND MINUTES)				
ENGINE	NO. 1	NO. 2	NO. 3	NO. 4
HOURS TO DATE	53:30	53:30	53:30	53:30
HOURS TODAY	3:50	3:50	3:50	3:50
TOTAL	57:20	57:20	57:20	57:20
OIL CHANGE DUE	Engine Change			
COND. CLEANING DUE	50% Inspection			
AIRCRAFT	HOURS TO DATE		53:30	
	HOURS TODAY		3:50	
TOTAL			57:20	

Oil gas Glycol Supercharger
Oil Hydraulic fluid +
Cruiser Chd (B, Harvey)
(2 hrs Service by Harvey)

Loaded 5M-30 Demolition Bombs - Sgt Winn

ENGINE DATA				AIRCRAFT DATA				AIRCRAFT ORG. DATA						
(1) SW-004795	(2) SW-004800	(3) SW-004875	(4) SW-62899	R-1820-97	42-31541	B-17G	Boeing	15th Wing	457th Bomb (H)	748th Bomb (H)	2nd	Sgt Harvey	Wendover Fld	12-22-43
ENGINE SERIAL NO.	ENGINE SERIAL NO.	ENGINE SERIAL NO.	ENGINE SERIAL NO.	ENGINE MODEL	AIRCRAFT SERIAL NO.	AIRCRAFT MODEL	COMPANY	GROUP NO. AND TYPE	EDWARD CORPS AND DEPT.	SQUADRON NO. AND TYPE	AIR FORCE	CHECKED BY AERIAL ENGINEER	STATION	DATE

748TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
OFFICE OF THE OPERATIONS OFFICER
AAB, WENDOVER, UTAH

December 24, 1943.

SUBJECT : Operational Briefing of Crew 16S-11, Pilot; William
R. Snow, 2nd Lt., AC, on December 23, 1943.

TO : Group Commander, 457th Bomb. Gp. (H),
AAB, Wendover, Utah.

Crew 16S-11 was briefed on the Operations of the day, by
W. D. Snow, 1st Lt., AC, 748th Operations Officer, as follows:

Crew 16S-11 will participate in a low altitude, 18 ship
group formation. You will start your engines at 0900, start taxi-
ing at 0910 and take off at 0930. The 748th Squadron will be the
lead squadron in the group. Your crew will participate in the
Group formation, flying locally, until the formation is landed at
approximately 1130. When the group formation has landed, the
Squadrons will separate and fly individually. The 748th Squadron
will reform on the ground, and again take off to fly a local, low
altitude, six (6) ship formation, flying the same positions as be-
fore. The formation will land again at 1300. After landing, the
crew will eat dinner and then report back to Operations for further
instructions. You will fly your own assigned airplane, 42-31541,
on all missions.

Lt. Woolf in ship 618, will lead the squadron. On his
wings, in #2 and #3 positions respectively, will be: Lt. Chapman
in ship 065, and Lt. Kuhl, in ship 458. You will lead the second
element with Lt. Birkman in ship 455, on your right wing and Lt.
Burkhart in ship 671, on your left wing. The standard group form-
ation will be flown.

"A CERTIFIED COPY"

Wilbur D. Snow

WILBUR D. SNOW,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Operations Officer.

HEADQUARTERS
457TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HV)
Office of the Weather Officer
AAB, Wendover, Utah

000.93

23 December 1943

SUBJECT: Weather Report for Wendover AAB, Utah at time of crash of
B17 airplane, 23 December 1943.

TO : Commanding Officer, 457th Bombardment Group (HV), Wendover
Army Air Base, Utah.

1. The official hourly weather observations recorded at the
Base Weather Station, Wendover AAB, Utah, for the times stated, 23
December 1943, are as follows:

1030PMT: E650 257/37/326/027

1130PMT: E650 251/38/306/025

2. These reports are to be interpreted as follows: 1030 PMT,
ceiling estimated 6500 feet, sky overcast, visibility 10 miles or
greater, barometric pressure 1025.7 millibars, temperature 37° F.,
dewpoint 32° F., surface wind calm, altimeter setting 30.77 inches.
1130 PMT, ceiling estimated 6500 feet, sky broken, visibility 10
miles or greater, barometric pressure 1025.1 millibars, temperature
38° F., dewpoint 30° F., surface wind calm, altimeter setting 30.25
inches.

3. I certify that the above reports, for the times stated,
are true and exact copies of the official reports on file at the
Base Weather Station, Wendover AAB, Utah.

Charles D. Weber

CHARLES D. WEBER
2nd. Lt., Air Corps
Staff Weather Officer

OFFICE OF THE ARMY AIRWAYS COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM
WENDOVER, UTAH

23 DECEMBER 1943

SUBJECT : ACCIDENT REPORT
TO : BASE OPERATIONS OFFICER

1. AIRCRAFT INVOLVED - 31541 AND 38065
2. TYPE OF AIRCRAFT - B17'S -- 748 SQ
3. TIME OF ACCIDENT - APPROXIMATELY 1125 PWT
4. AT 1127 AN UNIDENTIFIED SHIP CALLED THE TOWER, CALLING ATTENTION TO A CRASH ABOUT 10 MILES SOUTHWEST OF THE FIELD. THE TOWER IMMEDIATELY OBSERVED A TALL PILLAR OF BLACK SMOKE ARISING FROM THE DESERT IN THAT DIRECTION. AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME THE TOWER OBSERVED A B17 ON FINAL APPROACH, COMING IN FOR A LANDING ON RUNWAY 3 WITHOUT RADIO CONTACT. THE SHIP, LATER IDENTIFIED AS 38065 ROLLED TO THE END OF THE RUNWAY AND WAS ADVISED TO MAKE A 180 DEGREE TURN AND TURN RIGHT ON TO THE OLD TAXI STRIP TO THE RAMP. 38065 REPLIED THAT HE HAD ONLY ONE ENGINE AND WOULD HAVE TO HAVE A TUG TO TOW HIM. HE ASKED THE TOWER TO NOTIFY 748 SQUADRON OPERATIONS. 38065 DID NOT NOTIFY THE TOWER OF ANY ACCIDENT OR EMERGENCY. THE TOWER NOTIFIED BASE OPERATIONS IMMEDIATELY UPON BEING APPRISED OF THE CRASH.

OPERATOR ON DUTY

Cyril F. Vana

SGT. CYRIL F. VANA

APPRENTICE OPERATORS

CPL. JOHN F. NICKLAUS
PFC. JOHN C. PENDERGAST

TOWER OFFICER

CAPT. SMITH

748th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (Hv)
457th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (Hv)

WPR/gab

In reply refer to:
452.03

Wendover Field, Utah
24 December 1943

SUBJECT: Report of Maintenance Status on Airplane #42-31541

TO : Commanding Officer, 15th Bombardment Operational
Training Wing, Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho

1. Airplane # 42-31541 was in good condition mechanically
2. This Squadron completed a 50 hour inspection on the airplane 18 December 1943. The time on the airplane at this inspection was 53:30
3. Ordinary maintenance had been performed on the plane recently and it was in satisfactory flying condition
4. The only deficiencies on the plane before the final takeoff were:
 - a Latch on Bombardiers Ventilation Window broken and window taped closed
 - b Zipper removed from Chin Turret

For the Squadron Commander:

W. P. Roach
W. P. ROACH
2nd Lt, AC
Engineering Officer

FOUR FIFTY SEVENTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (Hv)
SEVEN FORTY EIGHT BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON
Office of the Squadron Surgeon

201.8

AAB, Wendover, Utah
23 December 1943

C E R T I F I C A T E

I certify that I have examined the following named officers and enlisted men prior to Air Craft accident of December 23, 1943, I further certify that I knew each man personally, that recreational and messing facilities were adequate, and further certify the pilots physical and neuro-psychic condition did not account for the accident and that there was no evidence of flying fatigue.

2nd Lt. William R. Snow
2nd Lt. Dwight T. Sullivan
2nd Lt. Robert F. Oberfelder
2nd Lt. Earl F. Saucer

Sgt. Vernon L. Cummings
Sgt. Morris H. Strong
Sgt. Edwin A. Liesinger
Sgt. James A. Henning

Shelby G. Bale
SHELBY G. BALE
Captain, MC
Squadron Surgeon

SPECIAL ORDERS
NO 358

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR BASE

Wendover Fld Utah
24 Dec 1943

- E X T R A C T -

- * * * * *
18. JAMES O SHIELDS 2LT AC 0517217 is asgd Engineering O in the Maintenance Supply and Service Sec vice LLT NOEL R CHAPIN 0567637 AC.
19. THOMAS D HUBBARD 2LT AC 0864054 is granted lv of absence for 15 days eff o/a 1 Jan 44. Address while on lv 2270 So Overlook Rd, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.
20. EARL (NMI) FORSTER JR 399th Bomb Gp (H) now casually this sta TP to proper sq AB March Fld Calif. TDN. 1-5250 P 432-02 A0425-24. Auth Memo 35-15 Hq Second AF 18 Oct 43.
21. JOHN J JAY 2LT AC 0674676 having reported this sta per par 26 SO 338 Hq Peterson Fld, Colo is assigned 315th Base Hq & AB Sq for duty with Tng Hq.
22. DAVID KLINGER 2LT AC 0583887 having reported this sta per par 19 SO 356 Hq 18th Repl. Wg Salt Lake City Utah is asgd 315th Base Hq & AB Sq for duty as Asst Courts and Boards O.
23. Sherley Dotson Pvt 33429657 the VOCO 20 Dec 43 directing this EM 315th Base Hq & AB Sq Avn Sec to proceed Salt Lake City Utah by Govt MT for the purpose of hauling property supplies and upon completion this temp dy to return this sta is hereby confirmed and made a matter of record the exigencies of the service having prevented issuance of orders in advance. In accordance with WD-Bul 19, 43, FD will pay the prescribed monetary alws in lieu of rat a/r \$3.00 per day for 1 EM. TDN 1-5250 P 432-02 A 0425-24. Auth Memo 35-1 Hq Second AF 18 Oct 43.
24. Pierre C Henry M Sgt 39157070 so much of par 8 SO 357 this Hq cs as pertains to this EM and reads "Pierre H Charles" is amended to read "Pierre C Henry."
25. Following named Capt aptd to Base Aircraft Accident Committee. Auth Memo 35-9 Hq Second AF 19 July 43. Board aptd by par 10 SO 333 this Hq cs is hereby rel'd.

DETAIL FOR THE BOARD

X

LT COL	WILLIS G CARTER	0274929	AC
LT COL	DUANE H SKILES	022836	AC
LT COL	HUGH D WALLACE	021232	AC
MAJ	JOHN S CHALFANT	0414691	AC
MAJ	GORDON H HAGGARD	0321772	MC
CAPT	HENRY E LAWRENCE	0478857	AC
CAPT	GAYLE W MAILE	0370351	AC
CAPT	MERLE B CRUM	0426071	AC (Investigating O)

26. ILEWELLYN L BROWN 315th Base Hq & AB Sq will proceed by bus to Brigham City Utah Bushnell GH for further observation and treatment. TDN 1-5250 P 432-02 A 0425-24. Auth TIX Bushnell GH 22 Dec 43 and Memo 35-15 Hq Second AF 18 Oct 43.

By order of LT COL CARTER:

OFFICIAL:

par 18-26
SO 358

Michael J Hand
MICHAEL J HAND
CAPT AC
Adjutant

MICHAEL J HAND
CAPT AC
Adjutant

















