

520

Accident No. 15 3 78 52
Date
Checked by DD 7 20 75
Assigned by _____
Copied for Wright
Field by _____
Notes _____

WRIGHT-8000

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

Narrative:

The two (2) aircraft were returning from an operational mission through very poor visibility. The pilot of A/C 42-97934 in attempting to go under a front with the group was separated from the formation and when he tried to get back, hit the tail section of A/C 42-97934. 43-39087 HKS

Immediate Cause:

The pilot of A/C 42-97934 showed poor judgement when, after losing the formation, he tried to find it again in extremely poor visibility.

Underlying Cause:

Adverse weather conditions.

Responsibility:

50% Pilot Error, 50% weather. Lt. STEVENSON, pilot of A/C 42-97934 was on his first operational mission. The co-pilot, Lt. MC MILLEN, was on his eighteenth.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Pilots should be instructed that when flying in formation in poor visibility they should not deviate from their heading and, if possible, keep other aircraft in sight.

Harry E. Lawrence
HARRY E. LAWRENCE,
Major, Air Corps,
Accident Committee.

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

James A. Mastine, Jr.
JAMES A. MASTINE, JR.,
Lt. Col., Air Corps,
Aircraft Accident Committee.

Signature: *James A. Mastine*
JAMES A. MASTINE,
Major, Air Corps,
Aircraft Accident Officer

Date 4 April 1945.

RESTRICTED
STATEMENT

29 March 1945

On 28 March 1945, in A/C 42.97934 we were returning from an operational mission and flying in formation with a group from another division returning from mission. I saw three more aircraft in this formation from AAF Station 130. I joined this element somewhere near Brussels, Belgium.

The entire group started letting down to attempt to go under a front. At 4000 feet, the group entered extremely thick clouds. Attempting to maintain formation, we became separated from the other aircraft, I would estimate about 100 yards. The co-pilot was watching on his side to try to see the others. At this time I believe the formation turned. The co-pilot saw the other aircraft but too late to avoid a collision. As soon as the men in the nose saw the collision they bailed out by jettisoning the navigator's escape hatch.

The co-pilot after taking over to avoid the collision, immediately perceived that the aircraft could still be flown so it was decided to remain aboard. We climbed to 13,000 feet, came out on top and came home. The radio operator started immediately to try to get through to air sea rescue while the co-pilot and I were assessing the damage to the aircraft. The time of the collision was 1330 hours.

Fred M. Stevenson
FRED M. STEVENSON,
1st 2nd Lt., Air Corps,
41.5 Pilot.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED
STATEMENT

29 March 1945

On 28 March 1945, we were flying in A/C 42-97934. We were flying no. 2 in a 3 ship element from this group that was tagging along with a group from another field. I flew through the first layer of clouds and we were in close formation all the time. We broke in the clear and the pilot took over, flying in the clear for a few minutes, then hitting another layer of clouds. He drifted too far out of formation, then dropped below and to the left of our element. I asked him where ~~he~~ he was going. He said he was leaving the formation. He then changed his turn from the left to the right, thereby turning right back into the formation we had left. I told him we would hit the group if we didn't get back on the same heading we entered the clouds on. He had just started to comply when a ship appeared directly in front of us. I took over and hauled the nose up. Our nose and 1 and 2 props struck the empennage of the other ship. The pilot jumped out of his seat yelling lets get out of here. I believe he bumped into the engineer who was standing between the two seats. I believe it was this that caused the engineer, navigator and toggelier to bail out. He gave no signal by interphone or alarm bell to the rest of the crew to bail out. He then returned to his seat and told me to bail out. I told him to go ahead if he wanted to for by this time, I had the ship under control. I picked up a heading of 300 and told the radio operator to get a fix and tell the station about the three men who had bailed out. Later the radio operator gave me a heading of 344 back to England but no E.T.A. We broke out of the clouds at 2000 feet over England and got a QDM to the base.

JACK O. McMILLEN,
2nd Lt., Air Corps,
Co-Pilot.

Jack O. McMillen

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

Accident No. _____

WAR DEPARTMENT
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

45-3-28-5-20
2 Planes

(1) Place 5110N - 0320E (2) Date 28 March 1945 (3) Time 11:00
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17G (5) A. F. No. 43-39087 (6) Station AAF 130
Organization: (7) 8th AF (8) 157th (9) 749th Bomb.
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

TYPE (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	STANLEY, DELMAR A.	P	0-775174	1st Lt.	18	AC	8th	None	None
CP	REA, PARKS M.	CP	0-782360	2nd Lt.	18	AC	8th	None	None
N	SCHIEFER, CARL E.	N	0-2068307	2nd Lt.	18	AC	8th	None	None
CHIN	WENDROW, LEONARD I.		31106925	S/Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
E	POPD, LEROY R.		18108251	T/Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
RO	HOWELL, ROGER J.		11192050	T/Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
BT	KISTLER, NORMAN C.		37685089	S/Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
WG	MASON, DALE W.		37732512	S/Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
TG	SCHUCK, JOHN A.		33771690	S/Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None
SJ	TANNEY, ROBERT R.		36755661	S/Sgt	38	AC	8th	None	None

(20) STANLEY DELMAR A. (21) 0-775174 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 18 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned (25) 8th AF (26) 157th (27) 749th (28) AAF 130
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) 8th AF (30) 157th (31) 749th (32) AAF 130
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)

Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 15 Apr 1943 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 15 Apr 1944 Instrument rating (37) 21 Oct 1944
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

First Pilot Hours:
(at the time of this accident)
(38) This type B-17 526:20 (39) Instrument time last 6 months 16:35
(39) This model B-17G 512:10 (40) Instrument time last 30 days 4:00
(40) Last 90 days 264:05 (41) Night time last 6 months 38:20
(41) Total 526:20 (42) Night time last 30 days 3:00

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	YES	NO	LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft		X	Left stab, left elev, tail cone - 2 - 50 cal. guns
(47) Engine(s)			damage.
(48) Propeller(s)			

(50) Weather at the time of accident Pre funnel clouds from 600 feet in layers up to 2600 ft.,
Light rain, visibility 3 miles, wind SW at 6 - 8 mph.

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

(55) Pilot's mission Combat mission

(56) Nature of accident Mid air collision.

(57) Cause of accident A/C 43-39087 was hit in tail section by A/C 42-97934.

(58) Form 54 not submitted.

RESTRICTED

Encl 1-1 Incl #5

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

Refer to Form 14 of A/C 42-97934 involved in same accident.

Harry E. Lawrence

HARRY E. LAWRENCE,
Major, Air Corps,
Accident Committee.

Rod L. Francis

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

Dwight A. Pefessich, Jr.

DWIGHT A. PEFESSICH, JR.,
Lt. Col., Air Corps,
Aircraft Accident Committee.

Signature *James A. McGuire*
JAMES A. MCGUIRE,
Major, Air Corps,
Aircraft Accident Officer.

Date 4 April 1945

RESTRICTED
S T A T E M E N T

On 28 March 1945, in aircraft #42-³⁹⁰⁷~~XXXX~~, while returning from an operational mission with some of the 398th Bombardment Group, we were flying formation and entered the soup. I was still flying formation on the right wing of the ship I had been flying on although I could hardly see him. Suddenly, I saw an aircraft heading toward me in a "banked up" attitude, heading directly for the radio room. I immediately shoved the nose down and felt him hit my tail section. The Engineer thought it safe to proceed to base, which we did.

Delmar L. Stanley

DELMAR L. STANLEY,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Pilot.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

S T A T E M E N T

On 28 March 1945, we were returning from an operational mission, in a B-17G aircraft number 43-39087. As we had been unable to find our own group because of the bad weather, we had gone in with the 398th Bombardment Group of the 1st Air Division and were returning to England in their group formation. While over France we were continually running in and out of thick soupy weather. About fifty (50) miles from the coast, at approximately 5000 feet, the soup got so thick that it was impossible to hold formation, so all the planes started peeling off in all directions. We were still flying off our element leader's wing when all of a sudden my Pilot, 1st Lt. DELMAR L. STANLEY shoved the nose down and I felt a jar in the plane. Another B-17G aircraft which we could not identify had hit our tail section, taking off the tail gun position and half of the left elevator. Controls of the plane were still controllable, so we returned to our home base.

Parks M Rea

PARKS M. REA,
2nd Lt., Air Corps,
Co-Pilot.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS
ARMY AIR FORCES STATION 190
Office of the Flying Control Officer
APO 557, U.S. Army

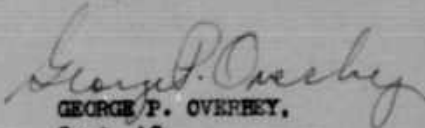
(E-0-13)

30 March 1945

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident Statement.

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

The mid air collision on 28 March 1945 involving B-17 #42-97934, Pilot Lt. Stevenson and B-17 #43-39087, pilot Lt. Stanley, was unobserved by flying control personnel.


GEORGE P. OVERHEY,
Capt. AC,
Senior Flying Control Officer

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED



(CAD-63-1-457)(20/1/45)(DAMAGE TAIL SECTION A/c 087)

RESTRICTED