

NAME OF PILOT

TYPE OF PLANE

ACCIDENT NUMBER

GUNN, ROBERT G.

B-17 G

45-6-19-501

CHARGED TO:

OUT

IN

CHARGED TO:

OUT

IN

CHARGED TO:

OUT

IN

Capt. Debban

9/26

10/11

Photostat

1/11

Miss Murray

2/7

RESTRICTED WHEN ENTIRE IS NOT RESTRICTED

**RESTRICTED**

ARMY AIR FORCES

**REPORT OF MAJOR ACCIDENT 79**

Use this form in accordance with AAF Reg. 62-14 and "Aircraft Accident Investigator's Handbook" issued by Office of Flying Safety, Headquarters, AAF.

Fill in all spaces except where otherwise indicated.

If additional space is needed, use additional sheet(s) and identify by proper section letter and subsection number.

FIELD OFFICES—DO NOT USE THIS SPACE	ACTION	DATE	TYPE, MODEL AND SERIES 8-17G	ACCIDENT NO. 456-19501
	PRELIMINARY REPORT RECEIVED	C. 6-20		
	FORM 14 RECEIVED	7-31		
	EVALUATED BY	Chapin 8-3		
	VERIFIED BY	RT 8-7		
	CHECKED BY	70M 2-2		
CODED BY	606 8-6	NO. AIRCRAFT INVOLVED		

**Section A—GENERAL INFORMATION** Z 925-0

1. PLACE OF ACCIDENT—State, County, Nearest Town, Distance and Direction from Same.  
**VALLEY AIRDRONE NORTH WALMS 1407th AAF BU BURDATC**

2. WAS COLLISION WITH OTHER AIRCRAFT?  
 Yes  No

AF NOS. OF AIRCRAFT INVOLVED (File separate Form 14 for each aircraft) **NONE**

DATE **19/6/45** HOUR AND TIME ZONE **1737 LBST** DAY  NIGHT

**Section B—AIRCRAFT** Y 361

1. AIRCRAFT NO. **42-97260** 2. TYPE MODEL SERIES **B-17 G DO** 3. HOME STATION **GREAT ASHFIELD**

4. AIR FORCE OR COMMAND **8th AF** SUBCOMMAND **3 Div** WING **3rd Bomb** GROUP NUMBER AND TYPE **385 BH** SQUADRON **550 BH**

5. DATE OF MANUFACTURE **2/5/44** TOTAL HOURS **1290:25** DATE LAST OVERHAUL **1000 Hr insp 20/3/45** OVERHAULING DEPOT OR SUB-DEPOT **455th SUB DEPOT** HOURS SINCE OVERHAUL **290:25**

6. Attach detailed statement of each order having direct bearing on this accident which have not been compiled with. Describe orders and give reasons for noncompliance.

**Section C—OPERATOR (Person at controls at time of accident)**

1. LAST NAME **GUNN** FIRST NAME **ROBERT** MIDDLE INITIAL **G.** GRADE **2nd Lt** BRANCH **AC** ASN **0-784146** SEX **M** AGE **20**

2. ATTACHED STATION **GREAT ASHFIELD** AF OR COMMAND **8th AF** SUBCOMMAND **3rd Div** WING **3rd** GROUP NO. AND TYPE **385 BH** SQUADRON **550 BH**

3. ASSIGNED STATION **GREAT ASHFIELD** AF OR COMMAND **8th AF** SUBCOMMAND **3rd Div** WING **3rd** GROUP NO. AND TYPE **385 BH** SQUADRON **550 BH**

4. AERONAUTICAL RATING?  Yes  No PRESENT RATING **PILOT** DATE RECEIVED **4/8/44** 5. NORMAL DUTY STATUS **PILOT**

**Section D—OPERATOR'S FLYING EXPERIENCE (Including civilian)**

FLYING TIME: 1. TOTAL HOURS **541:25** OTHER PILOT OR STUDENT **56:20**

2. HOURS THIS TYPE **357** 3. HOURS THIS MODEL **357**

4. HOURS LAST 90 DAYS **90:10** 5. HOURS LAST 30 DAYS **42:25** 6. HOURS LAST 24 HOURS **1:55**

7. ACTUAL COMBAT HOURS **150**

8. INSTRUMENT RATING: TYPE **B-17** DATE **17/4/45**

9. PHASE AND HOURS IN THIS PHASE: PHASE **/** DUAL OR COPILOT **/** SOLO OR 1ST PILOT **/**

10. AAF SCHOOLS PREVIOUSLY ATTENDED AND DATES: **554**

11. Was operator on instruments at time of accident or immediately before?  Yes  No

12. TOTAL—INSTRUMENT **554**

13. NIGHT, LAST 30 DAYS **954**

**Section E—PERSONNEL INVOLVED (Including operator and all other persons, whether in plane or not)**

DUTY AT TIME OF ACCIDENT	NAME (Last Name First)	TYPE OF ASSO. RATING (Symbols)	SERIAL NO.	GRADE AND BRANCH OF SERVICE	PERA. CLASS. SYMBOL (AAF Reg. 15-1)	ORG. ASSIGNMENT—AIR FORCE OR COMMAND GROUP NUMBER AND TYPE STATION	FATAL MAJOR MINOR NON-FATAL		PARACHUTES	
							USING UNBURNED (8)	NO. (9)	USED (10)	SUCCESSFUL (11)
P	GUNN, ROBERT G.	P	0-784146	2nd Lt AC	15	8 AF 385 BHGN			X	
CP	WITTLING, RICHARD D.	P	0-931023	2nd Lt AC	18	GREAT ASHFIELD			X	
N	HUMPHREY, ARTHUR F.	AO/N	0-725875	1st Lt AC	18				X	
RO	STOKES, KEITH D.	RO	36696654	SOT	28				X	
B	HALLSHEY, EDWARD W.	AO/N	13038390	N/SOT	21				X	
SI	WALKER, ARNOLD L. JR.	CTO	35771177	SOT	28				X	
SI	ELLIOTT, MICHAEL S.	WG	13170330	SOT	21				X	
SI	REY, WILLIAM A. JR.	AO/N	0-694543	CAPTAIN	201				X	

**RESTRICTED**

COMMUNICATION CANCELLED OR CHANGED TO **RESTRICTED**

Describe briefly the extent of the damage which occurred. (If no damage, write "None." If aircraft is missing, write "Missing." If aircraft was totally wrecked, so state)

1. TO AIRCRAFT  
**MAJOR - Damage to Nose Section, Nose Turret, Belly of Fuselage, Underside of Wings, Right Landing Gear broken off, Left Landing Gear collapsed.**

2. TO ENGINE	1	MAJOR 3	2	MAJOR 3	3	MAJOR 3	4	3 MAJOR
3. TO PROPELLER	1	MAJOR 3	2	MAJOR 3	3	MAJOR 3	4	3 MAJOR

4. TO PRIVATE PROPERTY (EXPLAIN ON ATTACHMENTS)  
**NONE**

**Section G—POWER PLANT FAILURE**

(Use this section of the form if power plant failure was a contributing cause factor in the accident. This must be signed by engineering officer)

1. DURATION OF FLIGHT SINCE LAST TAKE-OFF

	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)	
	ENGINE MODEL	ENGINE NO.	ENGINE-HOURS SINCE LAST MAJOR OVERHAUL	DEPOT OR SUB-DEPOT PERFORMING OVERHAUL	TOTAL ENGINE-HOURS	PROPELLER MODEL	PROPELLER-HOURS SINCE MAJOR OVERHAUL	
2. ENGINE MODEL	<b>NO POWER FAILURE</b>							
3. ENGINE NO.								
4. ENGINE-HOURS SINCE LAST MAJOR OVERHAUL								
5. DEPOT OR SUB-DEPOT PERFORMING OVERHAUL								
6. TOTAL ENGINE-HOURS								
7. PROPELLER MODEL	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
8. PROPELLER-HOURS SINCE MAJOR OVERHAUL								

9. STATEMENT OF OPERATOR, IF AVAILABLE, ON BEHAVIOR OF POWER PLANT AND MANIPULATION OF CONTROLS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE FAILURE  
**NO POWER FAILURE**

10. STATEMENT OF ENGINEERING OFFICER, MECHANIC, AND OTHERS AS TO WHAT FAILED AND PROBABLE REASONS WHY  
**NO POWER FAILURE**

11. OCTANE RATING OF FUEL \_\_\_\_\_ ENGINEERING OFFICER (Name, Grade, and Station) \_\_\_\_\_

**Section H—AIRFRAME, LANDING GEAR, OR OTHER MATERIEL**

(Use this section if materiel failure was a contributing cause factor in the accident. This must be signed by engineering officer)

1. DESCRIBE THE MATERIEL FAILURE, INCLUDING STATEMENT OF KIND OF FLIGHT AT THE TIME OF FAILURE AND ALL FACTORS WHICH MIGHT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TOWARD THE FAILURE

**Material failure unknown; the Hydraulic Lines in the Landing Gear were so badly mangled and broken in the accident that it is impossible to determine whether or not one of the Hydraulic Lines were broken prior to the accident.**

954

ENGINEERING OFFICER (Name, Grade, and Station) →

**Section I—SPECIAL EQUIPMENT**

(Use this section if special equipment—parachutes, radio, dinghies, oxygen equipment, fire extinguishers, etc.—was a contributing cause factor in the accident for any reason including failure, misuse, or by reason of not being in the plane)

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE SPECIAL EQUIPMENT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACCIDENT OR TO ITS RESULTS

**NONE**

**Section J—AIRPORT AND FACILITIES AND AIRWAYS**

(Use this section if the airport or its facilities or airways facilities were a contributing factor in the accident, either because of inadequacy, condition, or poor maintenance)

**1. EXPLAIN**

**NONE**

**Section K—WEATHER (This must be signed by weather officer of the reporting station)**

**1. WHAT WAS THE WEATHER AT THE TIME AND PLACE OF THE ACCIDENT?**

**OBILING UNLIMITED VISIBILITY 10 MILES**

**2. IF WEATHER WAS A FACTOR IN THE ACCIDENT, STATE HOW AND ATTACH COPY OF WEATHER REPORT**

**NO FACTOR**

**EH**

**WEATHER OFFICER**  
(Name, Grade, and Station)



**Section L—GENERAL INFORMATION**

**1. IF ERROR ON THE PART OF SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE OPERATOR WAS A FACTOR, STATE HOW**

**UNKNOWN**

**2. WHAT WAS THE MISSION?**

**FERRY**

**3**

**3. DID FIRE OCCUR UPON CRASHING?**

Yes  No

**4. WERE THERE ANY VIOLATIONS OF ORDERS OR REGULATIONS? (Explain)**

**NONE**

**NF**

**5. DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED**

**NONE TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED**

**954**

**6. KIND OF CLEARANCE (Attach Form 25)**

**AIRCRAFT CLEARED WITH**

**FROM**

**BREAR ASHFIELD**

**TO**

**VALLEY**

**OR LOCAL**

**STATION OF LAST DEPARTURE**

**GREAT ASHFIELD**

**7. IS UR FORM 54 HAS BEEN SUBMITTED ON ANY FEATURE INVOLVED IN THE ACCIDENT, GIVE UR No. AND DATE**

*No. 114 when called*

**EXPLAIN FULLY AND ATTACH COPY**

**NO FORM 54 ATTACHED**

**8. ARE COPIES OF AAF FORMS 1, 1A, ATTACHED HERETO AS REQUIRED BY AAF REGULATION 62-14?**

Yes  No

**9. ARE PHOTOS ATTACHED?**

Yes  No

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**Section M - DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT**

1. TELL IN NARRATIVE FORM, IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS NECESSARY, EVERYTHING THAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THE ACCIDENT. BE SURE TO COVER EVERYTHING THAT MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TOWARD THE ACCIDENT. INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION TO PREVENT SIMILAR ACCIDENTS, AND ACTION TAKEN

B-17G #42-97280 was in a flight of aircraft being ferried from Great Ashfield to Valley for Redeployment to the Zone of Interior. The aircraft arrived over Valley at 1715 DBST and called Valley Tower for landing instructions. The pilot was informed by the tower that landing was to the North on Runway One Four (14) (6000 Ft asphalt) and to stand by until called. The wind was N/NW at five (5) MPH. The Co-Pilot made his before landing check which includes checking the hydraulic pressure. The gauge indicated 650 lbs PSI. At 1730 DBST the tower gave the aircraft clearance to land. The pilot made a good landing 100 ft past the beginning of Runway one Four (14). One application of the brakes was made shortly after landing. The brakes responded normally at this time. The aircraft was allowed to roll about one third the length of the runway and another application of the brakes was made. This time the brakes were completely inoperative, the aircraft started slowly off the runway to the right. The pilot tried to straighten the roll of the aircraft with throttle while the Co-Pilot attempted to build up hydraulic pressure with the emergency hand pump. This was done without success. The hydraulic pressure gauge indicated zero lbs PSI. With both brakes fully depressed the aircraft continued to roll on the grass area paralleling the runway. An attempt was made to ground loop the aircraft, but before it reacted to the power, the aircraft crossed the perimeter track at the end of the runway. At this point the mixtures and switches were cut; the aircraft rolled over a knoll and dropped down into a hollow about six (6) ft deep. The left wheel broke completely off and the right landing gear collapsed causing the aircraft to come to rest in the hollow 100 yards past the end of the runway.

An investigation of the aircraft after the accident revealed the following. Two of the batteries were checked and found to be serviceable with specific gravity readings of 1250, the other battery was damaged upon removal from the aircraft at the time of the accident, but from external appearance is presumed to have been serviceable. Examination of the fuse panel proved that neither the hydraulic switch fuse nor the hydraulic pump fuse was blown. The hydraulic system was operated and found to be functioning properly. The electric pump was run, the hand pump operated and pressure and fluid obtained down to the brake boosters on both main struts. The hydraulic system was intact as far as the brake boosters after the accident. Fluid was obtained from the lines connecting from the boosters to the wheels. The flexible hose connecting the booster and wheel on the right gear was believed to have broken as a result of the wheel coming apart from the shock strut; hydraulic fluid was obtained from the ruptured hose line. The flexible hose line on the left wheel was damaged at the disconnect fitting. The brake expander tubes were not ruptured on either wheel.

Because the landing gear was so badly damaged as a result of the accident, the Aircraft Accident Investigating Committee was unable to determine whether or not there was a leak or a broken hydraulic line prior to the accident. Although this could not be definitely determined, it is the most probable explanation for the brake failure.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that pilots be impressed with the importance of checking both the hydraulic pressure and actually depressing the brake pedals to check resistance prior to landing.

IV F 64 954

**3. ACTION TAKEN**

Tower is requesting Radio Acknowledgement from pilots on hydraulic pressure and brake resistance checks prior to landing.

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATING BOARD FROM REPORTING STATION. EACH MEMBER MUST SIGN.		STATION:	
NAME - PRESIDENT <i>James R. [Signature]</i>		NAME - MEMBER <i>[Signature]</i>	
NAME - INTELLIGENCE OFFICER			
GRADE Capt.	ORGANIZATION 1407th AAF Base Unit	GRADE	ORGANIZATION
NAME - MEMBER <i>[Signature]</i>		NAME - MEDICAL OFFICER	
NAME - RECORDER			
GRADE Capt.	ORGANIZATION 1407th AAF Base Unit	GRADE	ORGANIZATION

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STATEMENT

20 June 1945

Upon arriving at Valley Airdrome from Great Ashfield at 17:15 DBST, June 19, 1945, I contacted the tower and received instructions to circle the field and await further instruction. At 17:30 the tower called and gave me landing instructions. I joined the traffic pattern on the east side of the field as directed and flew around the field to make our approach. We went through the check list preparatory to landing on the down wind leg. At this time the hydraulic pressure was satisfactory being about 700 pounds P.S.I.

We made a normal approach from about two miles from the field at 130 mph. This I.A. S. was used to insure a safe gliding speed of the A/C which was loaded so that it weighed approximately 52,300 pounds at time of landing. A normal landing was made at approximately 100 yds from the end of the runway in use. A calm wind existed at the time. After landing, I used the brakes to slow the A/C up at which time they worked satisfactorily. The co-pilot started through his after-landing procedure, opening the cowl flaps. The cowl flaps on number one and two engines opened but on number three and four they remained shut which we did not observe until later.

About this time the A/C started to go to the right; I applied the left brake and right throttle, getting a response from the engines but no reaction from the brake. The brake pedal was fully depressed. I called out to the co-pilot that "we have no brakes" and he immediately started using the hand pump while I kept both brakes applied. No results were obtained and the A/C continued to roll towards the end of the runway on the grass, having left the runway at approximately two thirds of the way down. We then tried to ground loop to the left but before the A/C reacted to the throttle we came to the perimeter track. At this point Capt. Schott, 550 Squadron S-3 Officer who was riding as a passenger came up in the cockpit between the pilot and co-pilot and having observed the difficulty moved the mixture controls to the cut off position and I turned off the switches.

We ran off the end of the runway and dropped off in a large hole, just beyond and to the right of the runway going about 40 MPH.

Three members of the crew and passengers were injured. They were as follows: Capt. Dery, who was hit in the side and back with the left check gun. He was exrayed and found to be only bruised. Sgt. Walker who cut one of his fingers on his left hand slightly. This was bandaged. Sgt. Elliot who was thrown against bulkhead number six and injured his shoulder. He was exrayed and found to have only a strained shoulder.

The A/C sustained the following damage:

- All four propellers bent.
- Right wheel broken off.
- Left landing gear strut collapsed.
- Flaps bent.
- Chin and ball buret broken.
- Plexiglass nose section broken.
- Right wing and under side of fuselage bent and scratched.



*Robert G. Gurn*

ROBERT G. GURN,  
2nd LT., 0784146

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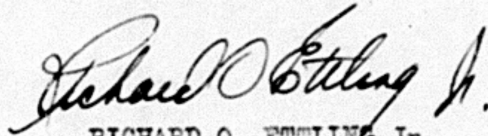
**RESTRICTED**

STATEMENT

Coming into the field on the approach, I checked the hydrolic pressure and it read 650 lbs. Right after the landing when we had plane under control I went through my after landing check about the same time I had finished, the plane started right off the runway, and the pilot told me the breaks were out. I looked at the pressure and the gage was at zero, and I immediately started to operate the hand pump but could'nt build up any pressure.

About that time the pilot satrted to bring the airplane back on the runway, by then we had exhausted our runway, and continued on off the end.

Right after landing we had pressure to work breaks, and also to open two cowl flaps, but it went right down and couldnt build up any with hand pump.



RICHARD O. ETTLING, Jr  
2nd. Lt.



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STATEMENT

24 June 1945

Brake failure to B-17G 42-97280

Left outer expander tube changed before ship took off. System was bled and all connections checked for leaks by continual pressure of parking brakes for at least a day, and by applying added pressure on pedals. Hydraulic Reservoir filled.

On taxiing out for take off brakes worked normally and hydraulic pressure was maintained by hydraulic motor until time of take-off.

On landing brakes held when pressure was first applied but failed to react again. The hydraulic hand pump was operated but was not necessary because motor was running at the time brakes failed. Expander tube was changed due to excessive time. All others changed at 1000 hrs.

M/Sgt. EDWARD W. HALLISEY  
Crew Chief, #280

*M/Sgt Edward W Hallisey*

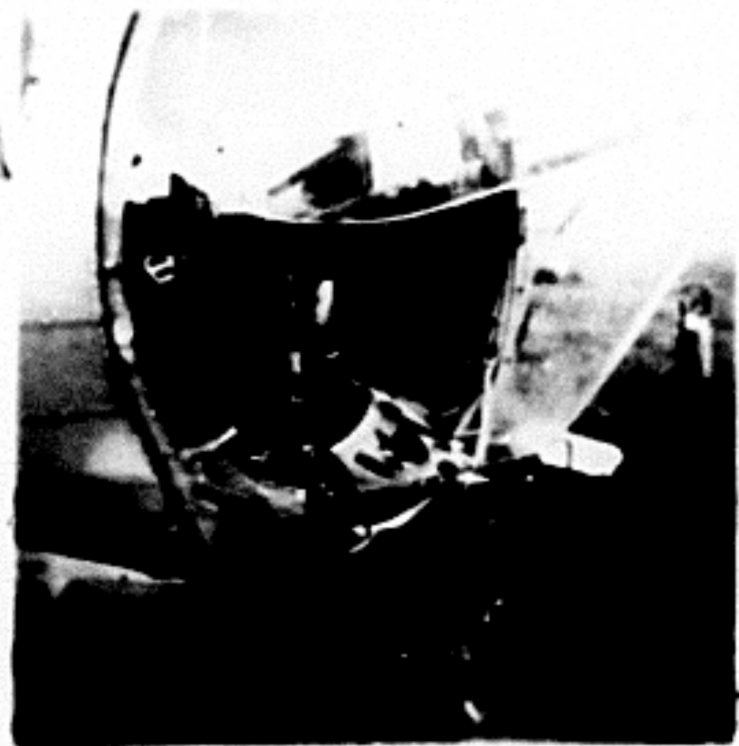


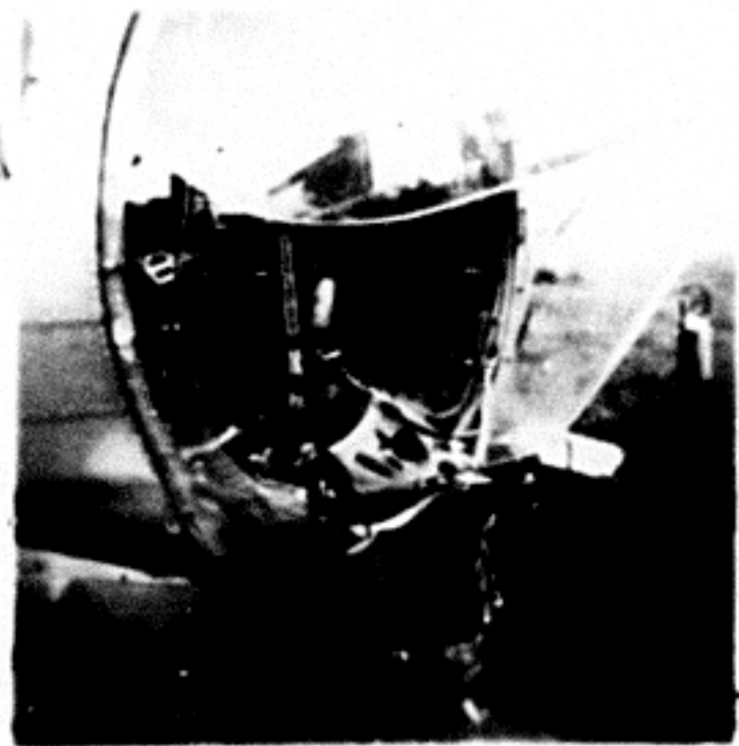
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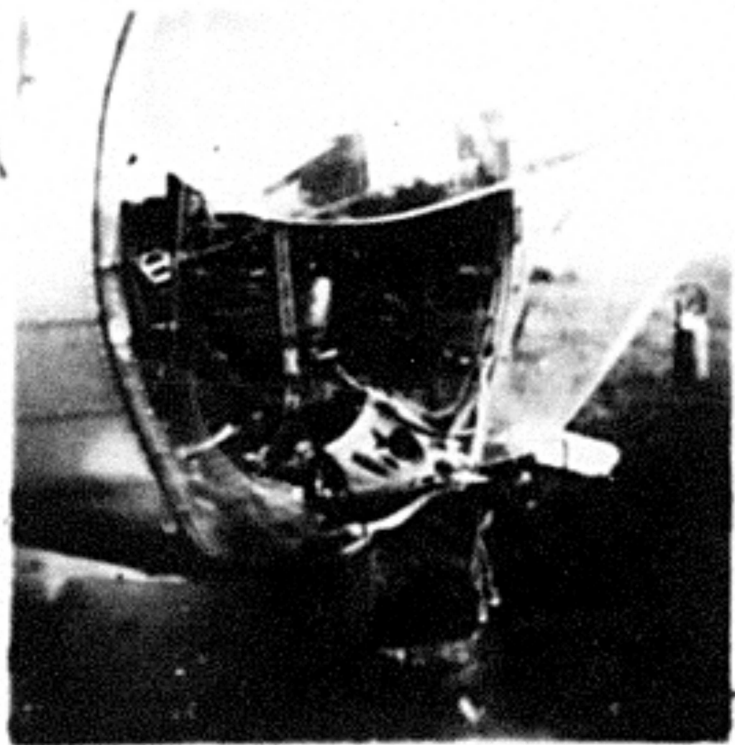
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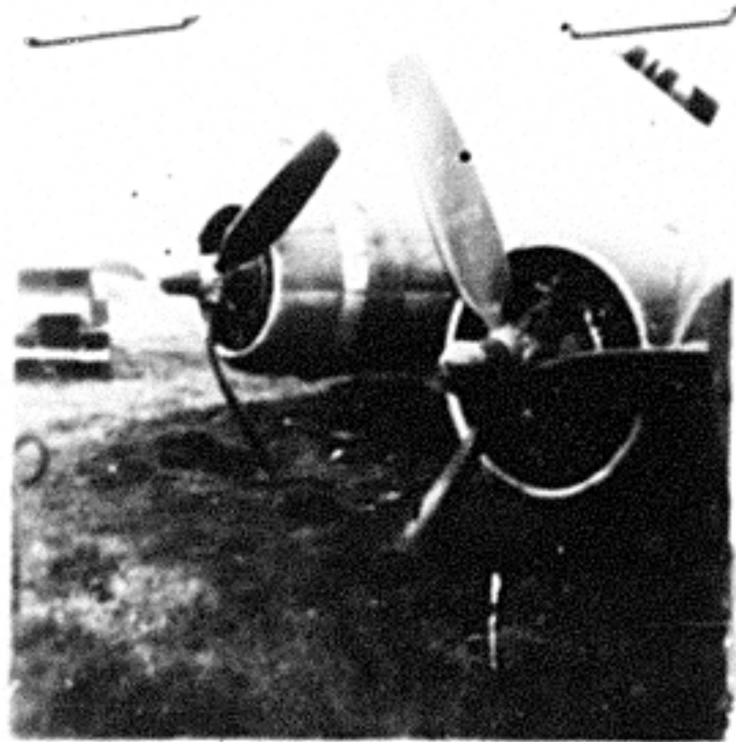
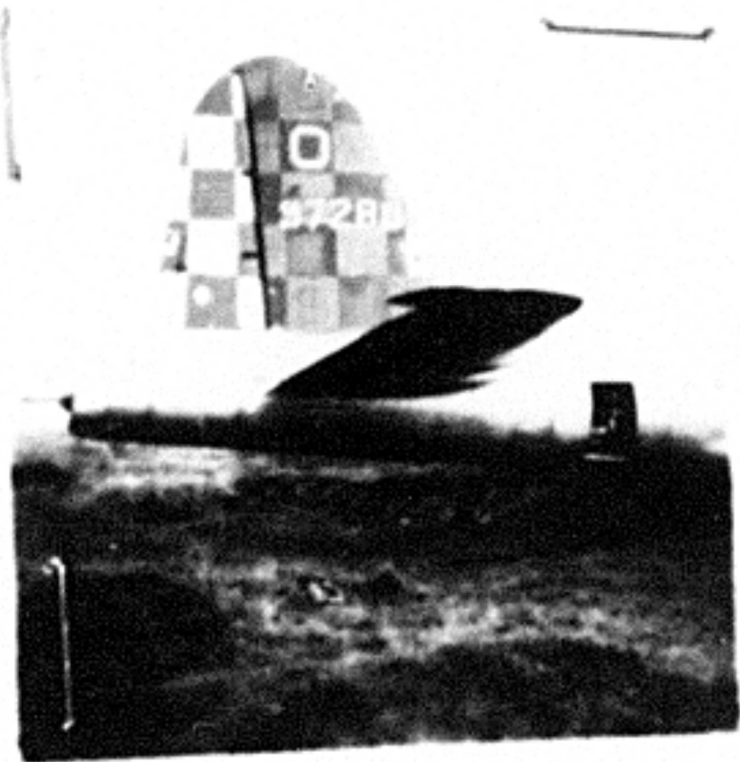
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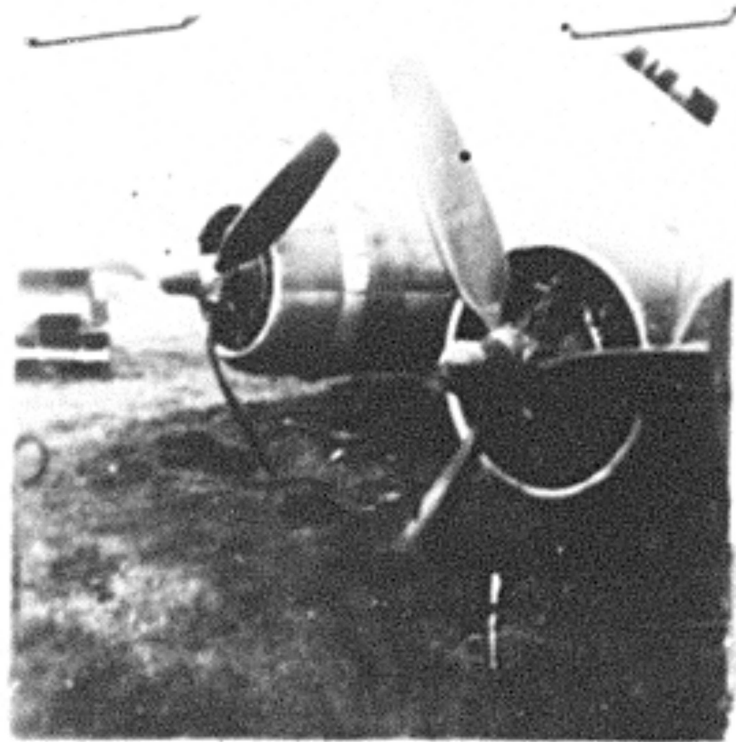
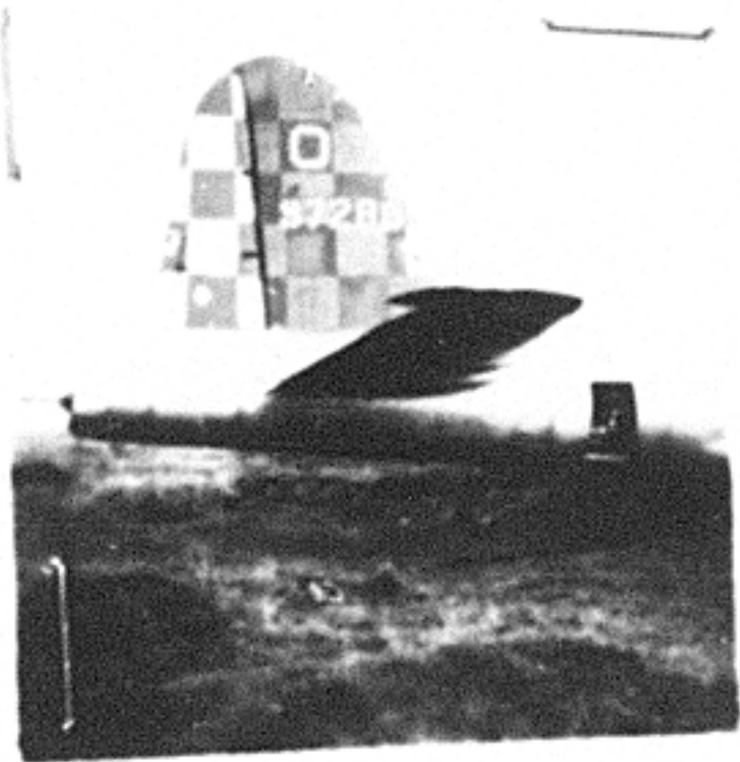


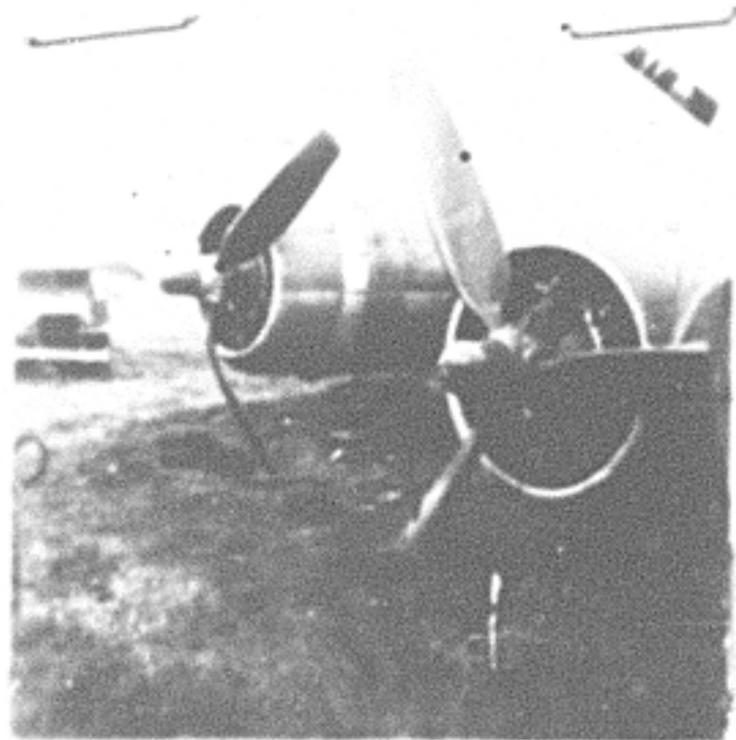
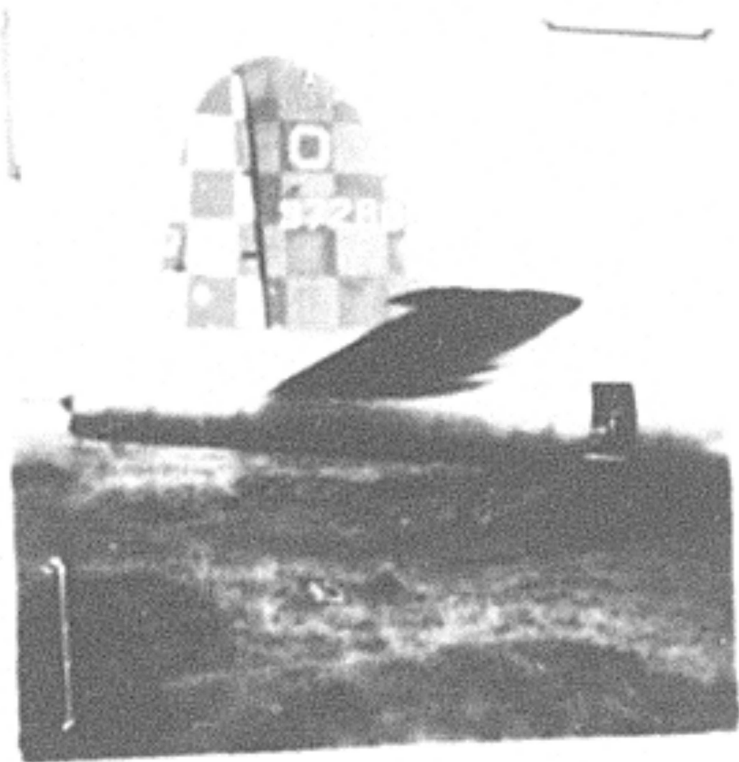












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HEADQUARTERS  
1407TH AAF BASE UNIT  
EUROPEAN DIVISION, AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND  
APO 741 c/o PM NEW YORK, NY

CPS/JDR/gw

360.33

19 July 1945

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Report of Major Accident, AAF Form No. 14.

TO : Commanding General, AAF, Winston-Salem, N.C.  
Attn: Chief, Flying Safety.

1. Transmitted herewith Report of Major Accident, AAF Form No. 14 for B-17G 42-97280.

2. Delay of attached report, awaiting a maintenance check of landing gear of aircraft.

For the Commanding Officer:

*Joyce C. West*  
JOYCE C. WEST, *JCB*  
1st Lt. Air Corps,  
Adjutant.

Incl: AAF Form No. 14,  
and 4 photos,  
with statements.

DISTRIBUTION:

Commanding General, AAF, Winston-Salem, N.C.

Attn: Chief, Flying Safety.

Commanding General, Hq. 3th Air Force,

AAF Sta. 101, APO 633, U.S. Army (thru channels)

Medical Officer, 1407th AAF Base Unit, European  
Division, ATC, APO 741, U.S. Army.



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BRIEF OF  
AIRCRAFT  
ACCIDENTHEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCE  
OFFICE OF ENGINEERING SAFETY  
WASHINGTONBRIEF NO. C-90952732

DATE AND TIME

19 June 1945 1737Z

PLACE OF ACCIDENT

Valley, Wales**RESTRICTED**

AIRCRAFT AND STATION

B-17 (42-97280) 385 Bomb. Grp., Great Ashfield, England

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

Probable major damage

PILOT NAME

2nd Lt. Robert G. Gunn

PILOT STATION

B AF, 550 Bomb. Sq., 385 Bomb. Grp., Ashfield, EnglandPERSONNEL INVOLVED  
AND INJURIES

Gunners: Sgt. Arnold L. Walker, Jr.; Sgt. Michael S. Elliott;  
Passenger, Capt. William K. Dery, Jr. -- minor injury. Pilot;  
Co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Richard O. Ettling; Navigator, 1st Lt.  
Arthur F. Hymphrey, Jr.; Radio Operator, Sgt. Keith D. Stokes;  
Gunner, Sgt. Norman O. Krone; Sgt. Charles J. Kaplan; Sgt.  
Albert J. Casini; Passengers; M/Sgt. Edward W. Hallisey; Sgt.  
R. L. RayMoens; Cpl. J.J. Redovick; Capt. F.H. Schett; (over)  
Hydraulic system failed as brakes were applied.

DESCRIPTION OF  
ACCIDENT

954

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MISSION

Ferry

WEATHER

VMD INFLIGHT  
ADACORRET INSTOTA

Visibility 10 to 15 miles, wind NNW 3 MPH, 2/10 to 3/10 cloud  
above 10,000 ft.

SOURCE

Anglesey Island, Wales DTG 20/0023Z IN-18715 (20 June 45)

**SECRET**

5-5260, AF

6-19-501  
Serial # 3