

Ident No.

44-11-18-6

Date

Checked by

Wintz

11-29-43

Analyzed by

Re

11-30-43

Copied for Wright

Field by _____

Notes _____

1225:9-43

Accident No.

44-11-18-26

Pilot's Name

Hoff, Robert S. 1st Lt.

Nature Group

02

Collision with earth

Specific Nature

06

Due to misdirection of flight path

Underlying Nature

00

Undetermined

100 %

Cause Group

37

Undetermined

Specific Cause

92

No information

Underlying Cause

00

Undetermined

Cause Group

Specific Cause

Underlying Cause

WAR DEPARTMENT
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES
CLOVIS ARMY AIR BASE, CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO
REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

44-11-18-268

(1) Place 9 miles North of Melrose, N. Mex. (2) Date November 16, 1943 (3) Time 1445 MWT
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model E-24J (5) A. F. No. 42-73356 (6) Station AAB, Clovis, New Mex.
Organization: (7) 2nd AF (8) 302nd B. Gp (9) 356th Bombardment Sqn.
(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	HOFF, ROBERT S.	P	0-797126	1st Lt	01	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
P	CHIAPPINI, WALTER R.	P	0-807688	2nd Lt	18	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
ACP	JOHNSON, LEROY H.	P	0-809003	2nd Lt	18	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
B	RUESS, NORVIN P.	B	0-691654	2nd Lt	18	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
IE	Sprinkle, John C.	E	33221438	S/Sgt	39	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
E	Martin, Stanley G.	E	35451361	Sgt	38	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
AE	McDermitt, John W.	E	38327371	Sgt	38	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
AIR	Trenary, Robert D.	R	35418820	S/Sgt	38	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
R	Klabusich, Joseph F.	R	35347794	Sgt	38	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
G	Mahoney, Jeremiah J.	G	32862016	Sgt	38	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
G	Walsh, Frank J.	G	33348233	Sgt	38	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	
G	Silverman, Bernard B.	G	32814867	Sgt	38	AAF	2ndAF	Fatal	

(20) ROBERT S. (21) 0-797126 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 01 (24) A
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Station)
Assigned (25) 2nd Air Force (26) 302nd B. Gp (27) 356th Bomb Sqn. (28) AAB, Clovis, N.M.
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) 2nd Air Force (30) 302nd B. Gp (31) 356th Bomb Sqn. (32) AAB, Clovis, N.M.
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 2-16-43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 2-16-43 Instrument rating (37) 8-10-43
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

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

(38) This type	592:25	(42) Instrument time last 6 months	28:05
(39) This model	12:40	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	00:00
(40) Last 90 days	170:40	(44) Night time last 6 months	148:25
(41) Total	988:10	(45) Night time last 30 days	14:25

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft	W <u>5</u> Burned completely.
(47) Engine(s)	W <u>2</u> W <u>2</u> W <u>2</u> W <u>2</u> Burned completely.
(48) Propeller(s)	W <u>2</u> W <u>2</u> W <u>2</u> W <u>2</u> Burned completely.

(50) Weather at the time of accident High Scattered, Visibility over 9 miles, Wind West by Southwest 13 miles per hour, Altimeter Setting 30.10.
(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No
(52) Cleared from AAB Clovis, N.M. (53) To AAB Clovis, N.M. (54) Kind of clearance CFR
(55) Pilot's mission Local Transition Flight.
(56) Nature of accident According to witnesses plane was in a vertical spin, hitting the ground and exploding.
(57) Cause of accident (Reference paragraph 3., Narrative - page 2.)
Actual cause; unknown.

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

NARRATIVE:

1. On November 18, 1943, B-24J, 42-73356 took-off from the Clovis Army Air Base at 1307MWT on a routine transition flight. The crew consisted of one nine (9) man trainee HBC crew, an instructor pilot, and instructor engineer and an instructor radio operator. The plane crashed at approximately 1445MWT diving almost vertically into the ground.

2. From conversation with eye witnesses (civilians) an estimated picture may be obtained as to how the plane acted shortly before it crashed.

a. The plane was first noticed at what appeared to be a normal altitude of 8 - 10 thousand feet. Plane was in vicinity of Melrose Range which is used for 5,000' bombing.

b. All witnesses stated that the plane was spiraling when approximately 500' high. It recovered from the spiral leveled out for an instant at approximately 200' then plunged vertically into the ground. Witnesses also stated the engines were not burning and no smoke came from the airplane while in the air.

X 3. Possible Cause:

a. Instructor was giving emergency procedure and the plane went into a spin when two engines were throttled back to simulate engine failure on take-off. The ship was pulled out of the spin too abruptly causing a secondary stall close to the ground and in attempting to regain airspeed ship was nosed into the ground.

b. That ship was put on C-1 pilot; which was inoperative throwing ship in an uncontrollable attitude resulting in the crash.

c. A possible control jam.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Due to the possibility of this accident being caused from emergency procedure demonstration on the B-24J type aircraft the following recommendations are submitted:

a. That emergency procedure demonstration on the B-24J aircraft cease immediately pending further investigation.

(NOTE: Upon thorough investigation the board finds that instructor pilots have noticed a tendency of the B-24J airplane to spin or spiral out of a stall..)

b. Further that all instructor pilots be again notified that emergency procedure will be demonstrated at a safe altitude.

c. That all aircraft in which the C-1 pilot is installed be checked to see that they are tagged as inoperative if they are inoperative.

d. That a maximum number be established on crews flying while emergency procedure is being demonstrated.

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT BOARD:

Edward R. Fuller

EDWARD R. FULLER,
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding, AAB.

Hugh H. Bowe

HUGH H. BOWE,
Major, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.
302nd Bombardment Gp.

Orville L. Buchanan

ORVILLE L. BUCHANAN,
Captain, Air Corps,
Asst. Operations O.
302nd Bombardment Gp.

Date November 19, 1943

AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS
Office of the Operations Officer
Clovis, New Mexico

18 November 1943.

SUBJECT: Aircraft Dispatcher's Report.

TO : Base Operations Officer, Army Air Base, Clovis, New Mexico.

1. At approximately 1445MWT was told by T/Sgt Joseph E. Myers to stand by on Crash Telephone 277. At 1445MWT, Tower called and said that ships #367 and #727 reported a ship down approximately six (6) miles north of Melrose and two (2) miles east of Melrose.
2. At approximately 1450MWT, was told by Major HOFFMAN to notify all parties concerned that there had been a crash, nine (9) miles north of Melrose, New Mexico and for parties concerned to proceed to Melrose and that he or Lt PERKINS would circle the town of Melrose and direct said parties to the scene of the crash. All proper parties were notified, with the exceptions of Lt. Colonel MAC DONALD and Captain PUGH. The Tower later contacted Captain PUGH in the air but at 1700MWT I was still unable to locate Lt. Colonel MAC DONALD.
3. From the information received in this office, was unable to determine whether it was a base ship or not. At approximately 1615MWT, called the Base Adjutant and was informed by Lt TUMANIS that it was a B-24 from this base. I immediately notified the Group CO and Lt SHOWALTER. At this time Lt TUMANIS did not know the number of the ship. At 1630MWT, called Lt TUMANIS and was informed that the plane that was down was #42-73356. I then informed Lt SHOWALTER and the Group CO the correct number of the ship. The Group CO requested the exact location of the ship and from the information previously received, informed him it was nine (9) miles north of Melrose. I then requested Lt TUMANIS to attempt to contact by radio, the car that was at the scene of the crash and ascertain a more exact location. At 1715MWT Lt ROSSER called and said that the exact location of the accident was, ten (10) miles straight north of Melrose and one (1) to one and one half (1 1/2) miles east of Melrose.

J. T. Anderson
J. T. ANDERSON,
Sgt, 38298395,
Dispatcher.

BASE WEATHER STATION
ARMY AIR BASE
CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO

November 18, 1943

SUBJECT: Weather Reports

TO : Base Operations Officer, Army Air Base, Clovis,
New Mexico.

1. The following are true extracts of past weather records and forecasts on file at the Base Weather Station, Army Air Base, Clovis, New Mexico.

2. Terminal forecast for Clovis and vicinity-1000MWT to 2200 MWT 19 Nov. 1943.....

High scattered to broken becoming clear to high scattered from 2000M to end of forecast period....? Visibility 6 to 10 miles restricted by smoke and blowing dust, lowering to 3 to 5 miles from 0400 to 0900M....Visibility tomorrow 5 to 8 miles limited by smoke and dust.... Surface winds southerly to westerly 12 to 18 miles per hour gradually shifting to northerly 20 to 25 miles per hour from 1400 to 1900 MWT..... Winds aloft 270 degrees 30 to 35 miles per hour.... Lt. Melvin E. Wilson Forecaster...

3. Sequences for Clovis 1330 to 1730 MWT follow:

1330	DCV	●/ 159/70/23→13/011
1430	DCV	⊙/ 156/73/24→15/010
1530	DCV	⊙/ 152/74/22↑7/009/ 803 0059
1630	DCV	⊙/ 163/73/24→7/009
1730	DCV	⊙/ 169/68/16↓8/012

Otis W. Curtin

OTIS W. CURTIN, S/SGT,
FORECASTER,
BASE WEATHER STATION.

Following is statement of Control Tower Senior Controller concerning aircraft accident 18 November, 1943:

"At 1445, B-24 Number 367 contacted the Control Tower and reported what appeared to be a small aircraft that had crashed and gave the position of the accident as six (6) miles north and two (2) miles east of the town of Melrose, New Mexico.

The information received was relayed immediately to both the Base Operations Office and the Group Operations Office.

At 1450, B-24 Number 727 contacted the Control Tower and reported the accident, giving the same information and position as had been received from the pilot of 367. The pilot of 727 was requested by the Control Tower to circle the scene of the accident to aid the emergency crash equipment to locate the exact position of the accident. When it was certain that this equipment had located the accident 727 was cleared to return to the field.

Control Tower Operator was requested by Group Operations to attempt radio contact with all local aircraft known to be in flight at the time, and contact was made with all aircraft with the exception of B-24 Number 356.

The last radio contact with 356 was the clearance for takeoff at 1309 and the ETA, as given by the pilot to the Control Tower was 1700.

Daniel L. Dalton

DANIEL L. DALTON
S/Sgt., 39095313.
Senior Controller

DISPENSARY, 302ND BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H), AAF
Office of the Group Flight Surgeon
AAB, Clovis, New Mexico

RES/rab

19 November 1943

SUBJECT: Report on Conditions Concerning Crew of Aircraft No. 42-73356, B-24J, which crashed and burned ten miles North and two miles East of Melrose, New Mexico, 18 November 1943.

TO : The Commanding Officer, 302nd Bombardment Group (H), AAF, AAB, Clovis, New Mexico.

1. The recreational and sleeping facilities were considered adequate. Recreation facilities included recreation hall, post theater, officers club, NCO club, post exchange, athletic area, service club, and bowling alleys in addition to the nearby town of Clovis. Officers and enlisted men were quartered in barracks of which facilities were considered adequate.

2. 1st Lt Robert S. Hoff, O-797126, instructor pilot of the aircraft had a WD, AGO Form 64, physical examination 15 May 1943, and was considered physically and mentally fit to fly.

Ralph E. Switzer

RALPH E. SWITZER
Major, Medical Corps
Group Flight Surgeon

AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS
Office of the Operations Officer
Clovis, New Mexico

19 November 1943.

SUBJECT: Statements of Mr. W. J. Stockard, Deputy Sherrif, Melrose,
New Mexico.

TO : Aircraft Accident Board.

1. The following is an accurate written record of the questioning of an eye-witness to aircraft accident; Army 42-73356, B-24J, nine (9) miles North of Melrose, New Mexico:

Question: Sherrif, wonder if you could tell us just what happened the first time you saw the plane?

Answer : Well, my attention was attracted first to the extra loud noise of the motors. I was west of where the plane was flying and the motors began to race louder then I noticed that he made a dive from about 2,000 feet and went downward in kind of a zig-zag (demonstrated at this point by witness, using model plane, of plane zig-zagging and then levelling out) then he got it kind of straightened out for just a moment. He was then just about 300 feet from the ground and then he went straight down and crashed and as he crashed, I could see the blaze go up and this took quite some little time. Just as he hit, the blaze and explosion occurred.

Question: Did you see anything fall from the airplane?

Answer : I could'nt tell.

Question: When you first noticed him, how high would you say he was flying?

Answer : I would say about 500 feet, of course that far away, it is hard to judge such a distance and at a distance of two or three miles Major, you could misjudge the height very easy and it might have been higher than I thought it was. I believe the plane was flying average speed and I ran to the Harkinson's house to use the phone but they had no phone and Mrs. Harkinson said she heard the motors fluttering and missing and told her daughter that the motors were missing.

Question: That was just before the accident?

Answer : Yes, it was.

Question: You didn't notice any smoke coming from the plane before it hit the ground?

(cont)

6

Answer: No.

Question: Was he spinning around (demonstrated at this point by model plane, of plane having a spinning motion)?

Answer : He was kind of spinning around and then went straight down and had the explosion. At one time, he did level it out and then went into the dive.

Question: Was the plane flying from the direction of Melrose?

Answer : To the best of our knowledge, it was one of the regular routine flights that they make, a little southwest of Melrose and it looked like the usual circuit that they make to go to the Bombing Range.

W. J. Stockard

W. J. STOCKARD,
Deputy Sherrif,
Melrose, New Mexico.

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME THIS NINETEENTH DAY OF NOVEMBER NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY THREE AT CLOVIS ARMY AIR BASE, CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO.

Walter A. Hoffman

WALTER A. HOFFMAN,
Major, Air Corps,
Base Operations Officer.

AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS
Office of the Operations Officer
Clovis, New Mexico

19 November 1943

SUBJECT: Statements of Mr. W. J. Stockard Deputy Sherriff,
Melrose, New Mexico. (Second appearance before
Aircraft Accident Board).

TO : Aircraft Accident Board.

1. The following is an accurate written record of
the questioning of an eye witness to aircraft accident;
Army 42-73356, B-24J, nine (9) miles North of Melrose,
New Mexico:

Question: Could you show us again what way the airplane
was going?

Answer : I was west and from what I could gather, it
was coming from the west and when I noticed the
plane, the extra loud sound of the motors
attracted my attention and it was kind of in a
spin like a circle (demonstrated: witness at
this point took model-airplane and demonstrated
a vertical spinning dive), then he got it
straightened out then it came back and made the
final dive at a slight angle to the Northeast.

Question: It was towards Mr. Harkinson's house?

Answer : The final dive was kind of towards his house
and then it scattered. *W. J. Stockard*

W. J. STOCKARD,
Deputy Sherriff,
Melrose, New Mexico.

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME THIS NINETEENTH DAY OF
NOVEMBER, NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY THREE, AT THE CLOVIS
ARMY AIR BASE, CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO.

Walter A. Hoffman
WALTER A. HOFFMAN
Major, Air Corps
Base Operations Officer

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AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS
Office of the Operations Officer
Clovis, New Mexico

19 November 1943.

SUBJECT: Statements of Mr. McAnear, Melrose, New Mexico.

TO : Aircraft Accident Board.

1. The following is an accurate written record of the questioning of an eye-witness to aircraft accident; Army 42-73356, B-24J nine (9) miles North of Melrose, New Mexico:

Question: We want you to tell us when you first saw the airplane?

Answer : The first time I saw it, it was in the air just about like that (demonstrated by model of plane about a 45° angle) and then it went and hit the ground from probably 150 feet.

Question: Did you hear the airplane before this time?

Answer : Yes.

Question: What direction were you from the plane?

Answer : I was southwest.

Question: In what direction was the airplane going?

Answer : It was going ~~north~~ ^{south}.

Question: Could you see the bottom of the airplane or the top?

Answer : I saw the top.

Question: How far away were you?

Answer : A little over a half mile.

Question: You were one of the first to see it?

Answer : Yes.

Question: You think the airplane was coming towards you then?

Answer : Yes, I believe it was.

Question: You were southwest and you saw the wings and top of the plane?

Answer : Yes.

(cont.)

Question: Was the plane coming towards you?

Answer : It was, going straight down.

Question: You were southwest?

Answer : Yes.

Question: Do you think the plane was coming down like that (demonstrated by model of plane spinning in a downward dive)?

Answer : Yes.

Question: Do you definitely know what the top and bottom looks like (demonstrated by model of top and bottom part of airplane)?

Answer : Yes, I do and it wasn't the bottom, it was the top.

Question: Did you see any smoke coming out of the plane before it hit?

Answer : No, I didn't. As near as I could tell, it hit like that (demonstrated by model of plane going into the ground at approximately 45° angle).

Question: As you were standing, show us just how the airplane looked?

Answer : It looked just about like this (holding model plane at approximately 45° angle).

Question: Could it have been the back or bottom part of the plane?

Answer : No, it was the top side.

Question: How far away were you?

Answer : About one half mile. From all appearances, it appeared that it was coming towards me.

Question: It didn't pass over your head before that?

Answer : No.

Question: Was it the loud motors that attracted your attention?

Answer : Yes.

(cont.)

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Question: Could you describe just how it made a different noise from the usual ones?

Answer : It sounded like they opened them up.

Question: Did you ever see any of these B-24's at 150 feet and did they sound as loud as this plane?

Answer : Oh, no.

Chester McAnear

CHESTER McANEAR,
Melrose, New Mexico.

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME THIS NINETEENTH DAY OF NOVEMBER, NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY THREE, AT THE CLOVIS ARMY AIR BASE, CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO.

Walter A. Hoffman

WALTER A. HOFFMAN
Major, Air Corps
Base Operations Officer

AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS
Office of the Operations Officer
Clovis, New Mexico

19 November 1943

SUBJECT: Statements of Mr. Charles M. Smith, Melrose,
New Mexico.

TO : Aircraft Accident Board.

1. The following is an accurate written record of the questioning of an eye witness to aircraft accident; Army 42-73356, B-24J, nine (9) miles North of Melrose, New Mexico:

Question: Would you give us some idea just what you saw?

Answer : Well, the first time I saw the plane, I came out of the house and heard it go over. I looked up and then went back into the house and heard the motors roar. I just figured he was pulling some kind of a stunt and stepped out and saw him go into kind of a spin. He was turning round and round and got down within 200 feet and kind of straightened up for a second and it looked to me that he kind of turned a little to the North a bit and then he hit the ground and the smoke and flames went 200 feet in the air. Something hit the ground out North of this and of course I didn't know what it was.

Question: What would you say, was the highest point you saw the airplane before you went back into the house?

Answer : I couldn't hardly say. He seemed to be flying normal.

Question: Did it look higher than the Clovis Hotel.

Answer : Yes, it did. I have seen them fly lower and higher but in my estimation, he was flying kind of normal.

Question: Was there anything wrong with the airplane's motors that you noticed?

Answer : No, Sir.

Question: The motors sounded O.K.?

Answer : Yes.

Question: You didn't see anything else fly from the airplane?

Answer : No, Sir.

Question: When you first saw the plane, was it flying normal?

Answer : Yes. When I came out of the house, he was practically straight east of the house.

Question: He was north from your house before he hit?

Answer : My house was straight west, he was flying level and it looked like there was nothing wrong at all and then he went into the dive but Daddy-in-law said while he was working, he looked up and seen him come down and then went back to work and he heard the motors roar and saw him come straight down.

Question: He was headed ~~North~~ ^{FLYING SOUTHWEST} of Melrose when you first saw him?

Answer : Yes.

Question: You say that when you were in this little house that you noticed some funny noises?

Answer : The motors were roaring/

Question: Was it a constant roar or just dit dit dit (demonstrated: a constant roar or one with a number of breaks in it)?

Answer : It seemed like it skipped a little and it sounded kind of queer.

Question: When the ship was spinning, did it spin all the way around?

Answer : It was going all the way around.

Question: When he came out of it, did the sound increase?

Answer : The motor was roaring all the time.

Question: Did it sound like the motor quit?

Answer : No. sir just a constant roar.

Charley M. Smith
CHARLES M. SMITH,
Melrose, New Mexico.

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME THIS NINETEENTH DAY OF
NOVEMBER, NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY THREE, AT THE CLOVIS
ARMY AIR BASE, CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO.

Walter A. Hoffman
WALTER A. HOFFMAN
Major, Air Corps
Base Operations Officer

AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS
Office of the Operations Officer
Clovis, New Mexico

19 November 1943

SUBJECT: Statements of Mr. C. H. Harkinson, Melrose,
New Mexico.

TO : Aircraft Accident Board.

1. The following is an accurate written record of the questioning of an eye witness to aircraft accident; Army 42-73356, B-24J, nine (9) miles North of Melrose, New Mexico:

Question: Wonder if you could tell us just what you saw?

Answer : Well, it was right close to 2:30PM I think and I went out to the well to water my horse and I heard the plane but never looked up and heard a terrible noise and it looked like it went just a little to the left of me and fell. It looked like it was about 50 feet high and then it fell but my boys tell me that they saw it away back and it was plenty higher. I thought the right wing hit first and don't know whether it exploded when it hit or not, I just told them to look at it and went right on working.

Question: Where were you standing in location to where the airplane hit?

Answer : I was east of it a few feet, about 150 feet. I never looked back and went on working.

Question: Which way was it flying when it came over your house?

Answer : Just a little Southwest, coming towards Melrose.

Question: Do you think it hit going that way?

Answer : Yes.

Question: Did it turn around any before it hit the ground (demonstrated: spinning)?

Answer : Yes, just a little bit.

Question: Did you see any smoke or fire?

Answer : No, Sir.

Question: At any time before the airplane hit the ground, did you see any parts or anything hit the ground?

Answer : No, I didn't see anything at all.

Question: Do you think it was all together when it hit the ground?

Answer : Yes.

CH Harkinson

C. H. HARKINSON,
Melrose, New Mexico.

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME THIS NINETEENTH DAY OF NOVEMBER, NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY THREE, AT THE CLOVIS ARMY AIR BASE, CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO.

Walter A. Hoffman

WALTER A. HOFFMAN
Major, Air Corps
Base Operations Officer

AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS
Office of the Operations Officer
Clovis, New Mexico

19 November 1943.

SUBJECT: Statements of Mr. H. E. Pace, Melrose, New Mexico.

TO : Aircraft Accident Board.

1. The following is an accurate written record of the questioning of an eye-witness to aircraft accident: Army 42-73356, B-24J nine (9) miles North of Melrose, New Mexico:

Question: We want you to tell us just what you saw?

Answer : I was about two miles from there, up on a rise working and I seen the plane was on a decline (demonstrated of plane being at approximately 90° angle) and I heard it roar and then the crash came.

Question: The only time you saw it was when it was very close to the ground?

Answer : Yes, I judge not more than 200 feet but this rise I was working on, could have made a variation in my view.

Question: You didn't notice the airplane before this time?

Answer : No, sir.

Question: Was it turning at all (demonstrated by model, of plane spinning)?

Answer : It seemed to be turning a little (demonstrated by model of plane having a slight spinning motion or twisting).

Question: Which direction did it seem to be flying?

Answer : It was coming from the northeast then I saw it going to the southwest.

Question: You were two miles west of it?

Answer : Yes.

Question: Did you see any smoke after it hit?

Answer : Oh, yes.

(cont.)

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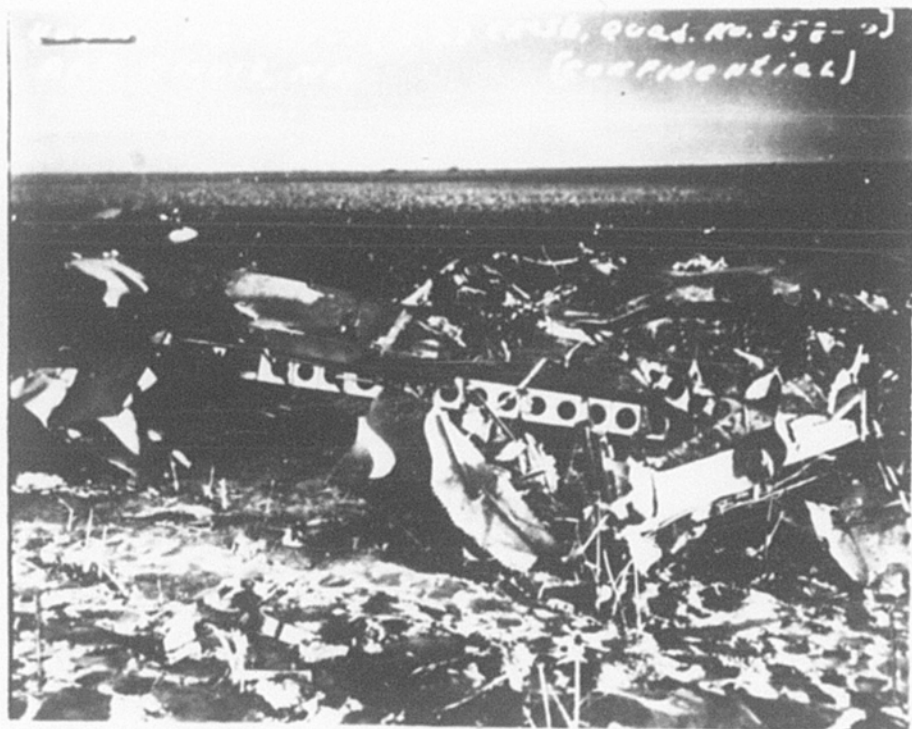
H E Pace

H. E. PACE,
Melrose, New Mexico.

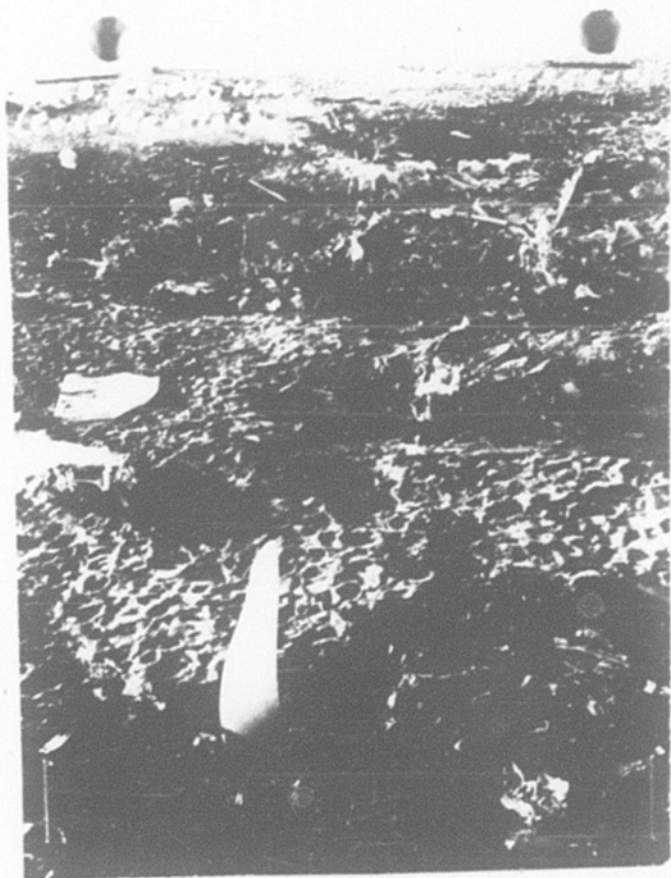
SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME THIS NINETEENTH DAY OF NOVEMBER
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY THREE, AT THE CLOVIS ARMY AIR BASE,
CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO.

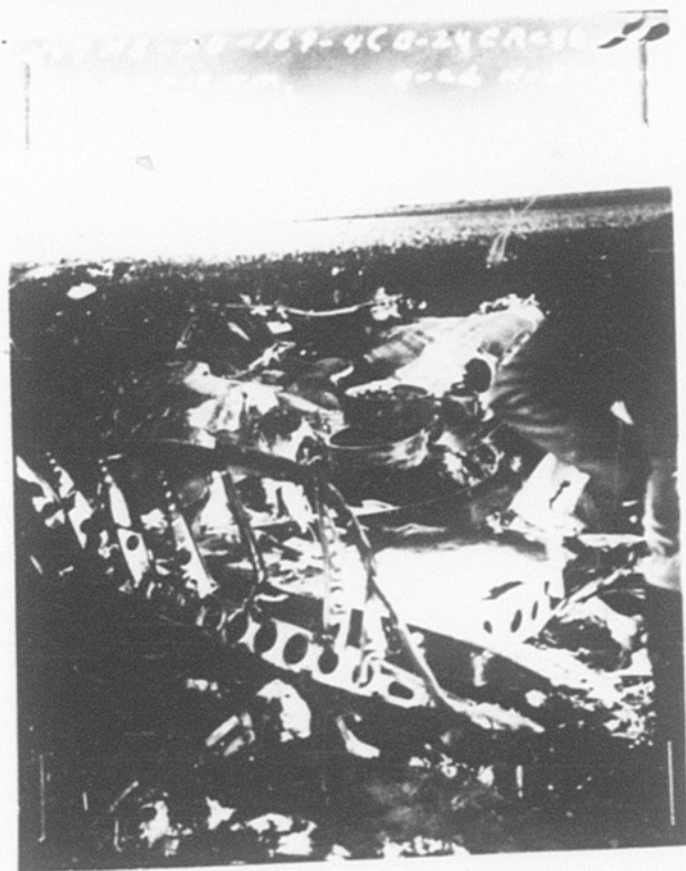
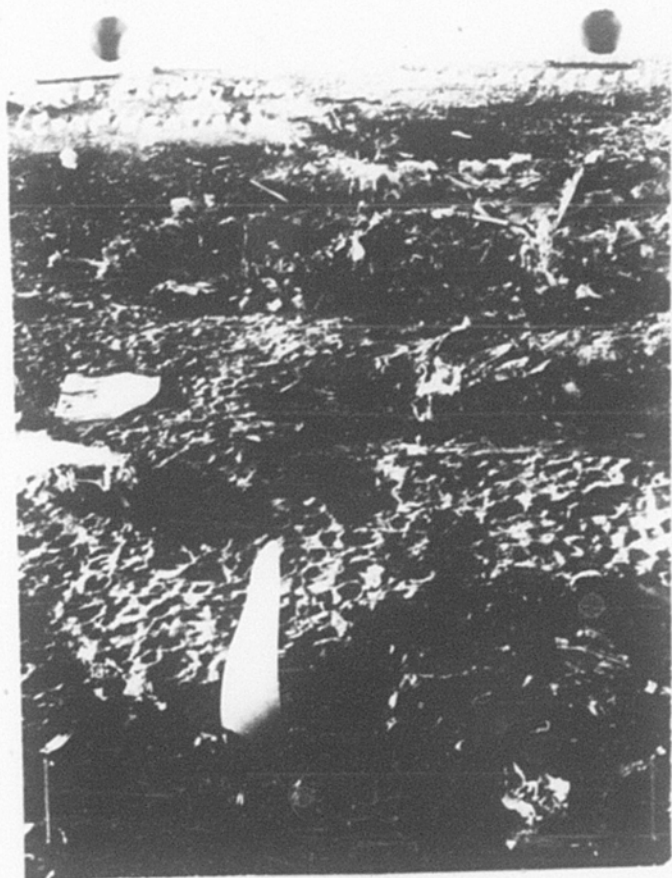
Walter A. Hoffman
WALTER A. HOFFMAN,
Major, Air Corps,
Base Operations Officer.

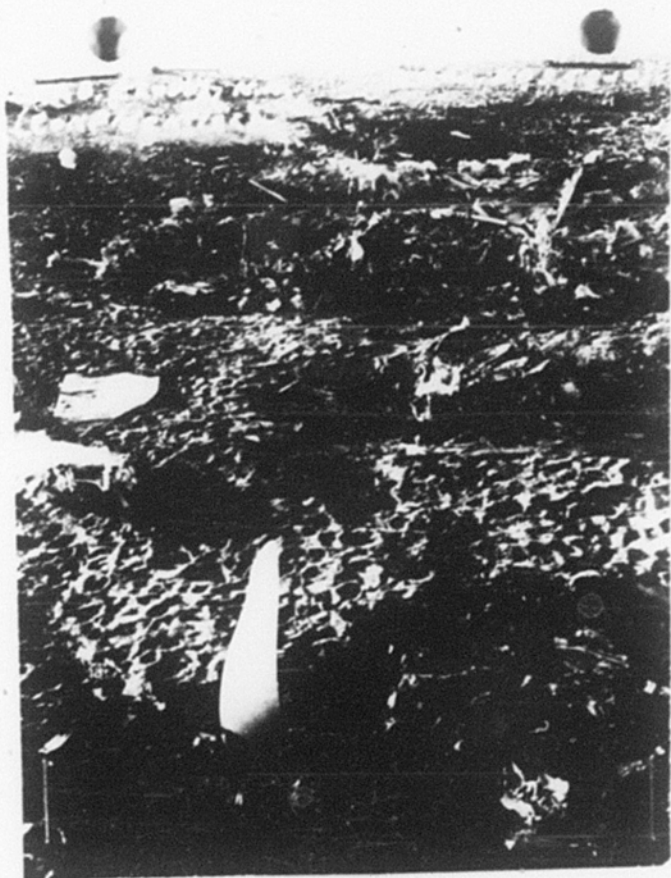












CL O f
SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR INSTRUCTIONS

356 th SQUADRON

302ND BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H), AAF.

11-18-43

(DATE)

MEMO TO: Squadron Operations Officers.

1. In accordance with Flight Schedule, your office, the following named personnel this date departed Clovis AAB for Local.
(Place of Departure) (Destination)

in B-24J 42-73356 at 12:00
(Aircraft Model & Serial No.) (Time of Departure)

MISSION C.

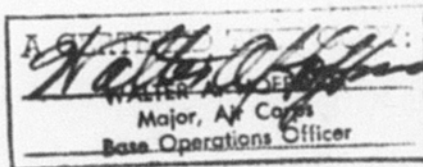
IP	<u>HOFF</u>	<u>1st Lt.</u>		
P	<u>CHIAPPINI</u>	<u>2nd Lt.</u>	R	<u>TRENARY</u> <u>S/Sgt</u>
CP	<u>JOHNSON</u>	<u>2nd Lt.</u>	AR	<u>KLABUSICH</u> <u>Sgt</u>
N			PH	
B	<u>RUESS</u>	<u>2nd Lt.</u>	APH	
I	<u>SPRINKLE</u>	<u>S/Sgt</u>	G	<u>MAHONEY</u> <u>Sgt</u>
E	<u>MARTIN</u>	<u>Sgt</u>	X	<u>WALSH</u> <u>Sgt</u>
AE	<u>MCDERMITT</u>	<u>Sgt</u>	X	<u>SILVERMAN</u> <u>Sgt</u>

I certify that I have checked the above personnel list and found it to be correct. I further certify that all members of the crew have parachutes readily available and adjusted properly in accordance with AAF Regulation No. 60-5, and that the interphone system and warning system are functioning properly and that the operation of these systems is understood by all crew members.

/s/ R.S. HOFF
(Pilot's Signature)

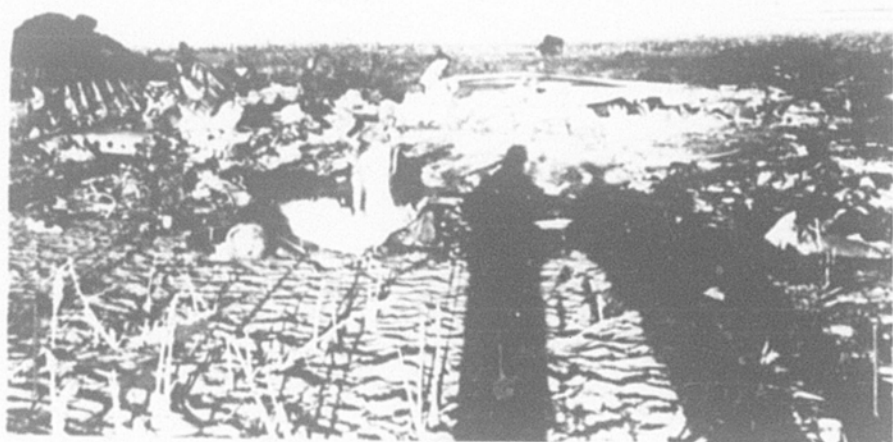
SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR INSTRUCTIONS

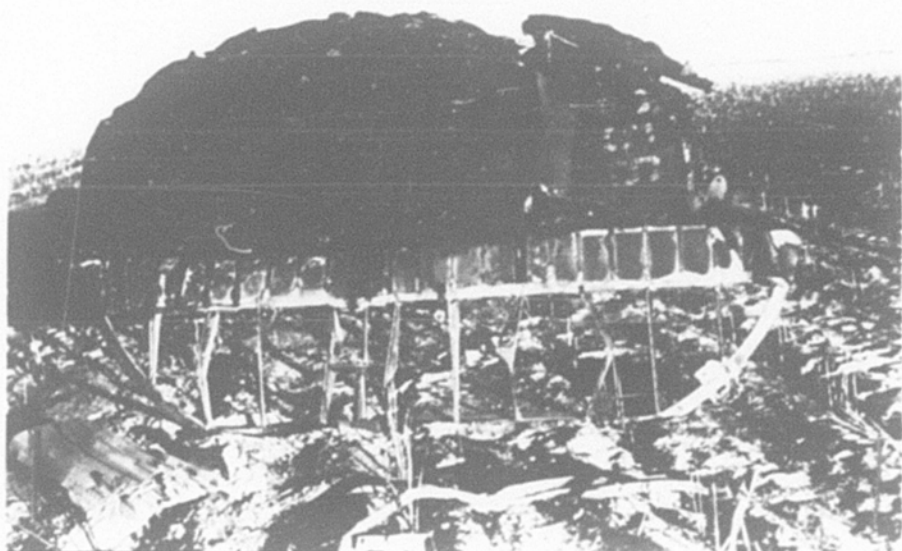
- 1 -

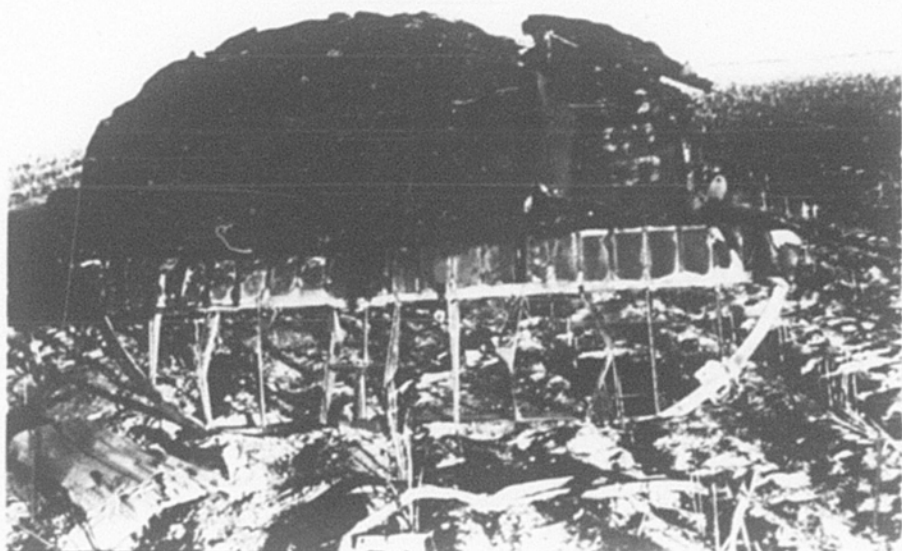














AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS
Office of the Operations Officer
Clovis, New Mexico

WAH/tmk

23 November 1943

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident Report; Army 42-73356,
B-24J, 302nd Bombardment Group (H), 356th
Bombardment Squadron.


TO : Commanding General, AAF, Headquarters Army
Air Forces, Office of Flying Safety,
Prevention and Investigation Division,
Winston Salem, North Carolina.

1. This station forwarding Form 14 and allied
papers on aircraft accident; Army 42-73356, B-24J,
nine (9) miles North of Melrose, New Mexico.

2. Report is submitted in compliance with
Army Air Force Regulation 62-14, dated May 26, 1942.

For the Commanding Officer:

1 Incl:
Incl 1 - Aircraft Accident
Report; Army
42-73356, B-24J.


WALTER A. HOFFMAN
Major, Air Corps
Base Operations Officer

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR ACTION P&I
FOR INFO OFC MGMT
FOR FILE M&R

DATE 22 NOVEMBER 43

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

WA V YB NR10

FROM FULLER CO AAB CLOVIS NMEX 220135Z

TO DIRECTORATE OF FLYING SAFETY OFF OF FLYING SAFETY

PREVENTION AND INVESTIGATION DIV WINSTONSALEM N C

CVN849EE PERIOD ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR THE COMPLETION OF CV N SEVEN
TWO FIVE EE THIS HEADQUARTERS DATED NOVEMBER ONE NINE CMA NINETEEN
HUNDRED FORTY THREE CMA ON AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT PRELIMINARY REPORT ARMY
FOUR TWO DASH SEVEN THREE THREE FIVE SIX PD ACTUAL CAUSE OF ACCIDENT
UNKNOWN PD POSSIBLE CAUSE OF ACCIDENT COLON INSTRUCTOR WAS GIVING
EMERGENCY PROCEDURE AND PLANE WENT INTO A SPIN WHEN TWO ENGINES WERE
THROTTLED BACK TO SIMULATE ENGINE FAILURE ON TAKE OFF CMA THE SHIP WAS
PULLED OUT OF THE SPIN TOO ABRUPTLY CAUSING A SECONDARY STALL CLOSE
TO THE GROUND AND IN ATTEMPTING TO REGAIN AIRSPEED SHIP NOSED INTO THE
GROUND PD NATURE OF ACCIDENT STATED IN PRELIMINARY REPORT PD

NR1/ES.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR ACTION PTG
FOR INFO/FC MGMT.
FOR FILE M&R.

DATE 19 NOV. 1943.

XX

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

523

WINSTON SALEM V CLOVIS NM YB NR 17..

FROM FULLER COAB CLOVIS NEWMEXICO AAB 190515Z

TO DIRECTORATE OF FLYING SAFETY, OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY, PREVENTION
AND INVESTIGATION DV/ DIVISION..

WINSTON SALEM NORTH CAROLINA..

CV N 726 EE PERIOD..

18 NOVEMBER 194 CMA 1445 CMA 9 MILES NORTH OF MELROSE NEW MEXICOPD HOFF,
ROBERT S CMA FIRST LIEUTENANT CMA 00-797126 CMA 01 CMA SECOND AIR FORCE
CMA THREE ZERO TWO BOMBARDMENT GROUP CMA THREE FIVE SIX SQUADRON CMA
CLOVIS ARMY AIR BASE CMA CLOVIS CMA NEW MEXICO OD ACCORDING TO EYE WITNESS-
ES PLANE WAS IN A VERTICAL SPIN CMA HITTING GROUND AND EXPLODING PD IN-
STRUCTOR PILOT HOFF, ROBERT S. CMA FIRST LIEUTENANT CMA 0-797126 CMA 01
CMA FATAL CMA PILOT CHIAPPINI, WALTER R. CMA SECOND LIEUTENANT CMA 0-907688
CMA 18 CMA FATAL CMA CO-PILOT JOHNSON, LEROY. H CMA SECOND LIEUTENANT CMA
0-809003 CMA 18 CMA FATAL CMA BOMBARDIER RUSS, MORVIN P. CMA SECOND
LIEUTENANT CMA 0-691654 CMA 18 CMA FATAL CMA INSTRUCTOR ENGINEER CMA
SPRINKLE, JOHN C. CMA S/SGT CMA 33221438 CMA 38 CMA FATAL CMA ENGINEER
MARTIN, STANLEY G. CMA SGT CMA 35451361 CMA 38 CMA FATAL CMA ASST ENG-
INEER MC DERMOTT, JOHN W. CMA SGT CMA 38327371 CMA 38 CMA FATAL CMA IN-
STRUCTOR RADIO OPERATOR TRENARY, ROBERT D. CMA S/SGT CMA 35418820 CMA 38
CMA FATAL CMA RADIO OPERATOR CMA KLABUSICH, JOSEPH F CMA SGT CMA 35347794

CONTINUED PAGE TWO..

44-11-18-26

1292:10-43

(over) 28

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR ACTION
FOR INFO DEG MGMT
FOR FILE M&B

DATE 19 NOV. 1943.

XX

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

CONTINUED PAGE TWO.

⁶⁴ CMA 38 CMA FATAL CMA GUNNER MAHONEY, JEREMIAH J. CMA SGT CMA 32862016
⁶⁴ CMA 38 CMA FATAL CMA GUNNER WALSH, FRANK J. CMA SGT CMA 33348233 CMA 38
⁶⁴ CMA FATAL CMA GUNNER SILVERMAN, BERNARD B CMA SGT CMA 32814867 CMA 38
FATAL PD NOTE. ALL ABOVE PERSONNEL IN THE THREE ZERO TWO BOMBARDMENT
GROUP CMA THREE FIVE SIX BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON PD LOCAL TRANSITION FLIGHT
PD CAVU PD 4273356 CMA B-24J CMA THREE ZERO TWO BOMBARDMENT GROUP CMA
THREE FIVE SIX BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON CMA CLOVIS ARMY AIR BASE CMA CLOVIS
CMA NEW MEXICO PD COMPLETE WRECK PD UNKNOWN BURNED COMPLETELY PD UNKNOWN
PD 24.40 HOURS SINCE LAST INSPECTION PD..

#19.

PS..

1292:10-43

29.