

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

3-27-45
7169
19-001

(1) Place Castelluccio Air Field (2) Date 3-9-45 (3) Time 1804
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-24J (5) A. F. No. 42-51372 (6) Station Castelluccio Air Field
Organization: (7) 15th AF (8) 451st Bomb Gp (9) 725th Bomb Sq
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL BH

POST (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	Silliman, William M.	P	0-777848	2nd Lt	18	AC	15th	None	No
CP	Roberts, Carl B.	P	0-2059419	2nd Lt	18	AC	15th	None	No
N	Stafford, Charles E.	N	0-2066114	2nd Lt	18	AC	15th	None	No
R	Green, Harold N.	B	0-773368	2nd Lt	18	AC	15th	None	No
E	Willis, Forrest G.	EG	1533795	Sgt	38	AAF	15th	None	No
RO	Katabrooks, John M.	ROG	12137698	Sgt	38	AAF	15th	None	No
RG	Morton, Richard F.	AG	3675984	Sgt	38	AAF	15th	None	No
WG	Waite, Bruce C.	AWG	32068543	Sgt	38	AAF	15th	None	No
TG	Berns, Laurence L.	AWG	57834780	Sgt	38	AAF	15th	None	No
NG	Latchaw, Arthur V.	AWG	37687937	Sgt	38	AAF	15th	None	No

(20) Silliman William M (21) 0-777848 (22) 2nd Lt (23) 18 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned (25) 15th AF (26) 451st B.G. (27) 725th Bomb Sq (28) Castelluccio Air Field
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) 15th AF (30) 451st B.G. (31) 725th Bomb Sq (32) Castelluccio Air Field
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 5-23-44 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 5-23-44 Instrument rating (37) 10-28-44
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date) (Date)

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

(38) This type	<u>B-24</u>	<u>199:50</u>	(42) Instrument time last 6 months	<u>—</u>
(39) This model	<u>B-24J</u>	<u>108:15</u>	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	<u>—</u>
(40) Last 90 days		<u>112:25</u>	(44) Night time last 6 months	<u>—</u>
(41) Total		<u>602:15</u>	(45) Night time last 30 days	<u>—</u>

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

NF

DAMAGE	(46) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>M</u>	
(47) Engine(s)	
(48) Propeller(s)	

(50) Weather at the time of accident 6/10 strato cumulus at 3,500 feet. Wind North 12 MPH. Variable Visibility 10 miles. Rain squall over field.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident NO
(52) Cleared from Castelluccio (53) To Castelluccio (54) Kind of clearance Combat
(55) Pilot's mission Combat

(56) Nature of accident: Landing accident

(57) Cause of accident: Left tire blew out

(58) No.

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

NARRATIVE STATEMENT

Accident occurred during formation landing upon return from combat mission. The tower had warned all aircraft to land short as the runway was very slippery and the wind was gusty. A reasonably normal landing was made, but the aircraft's left tire was allowed to hit the edge of the pierced steel plank runway and blew the tire. Ship then swerved to the left and came to rest 90° to runway with clearance ten (10) feet from edge of runway. Instead of pulling ship on clear of runway and allow greater margin of clearance for ships landing, the engines were stopped. This resulted in further damage and accidents submitted on separate reports.

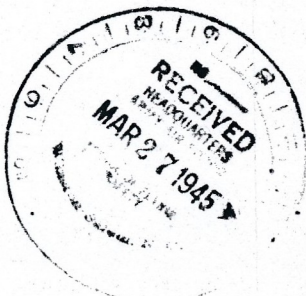
RESPONSIBILITY

Personnel error - Poor pilot technique, 60%.

Extenuating circumstances - Severe gusty wind, slippery runway, bomb load, 40%.

ACTION TO PREVENT REPETITION

All pilots have been instructed in necessity of landing short on slippery runway with bomb load and danger of leaving ship near runway when other ships are landing.



Leroy L. Stefonowicz
 LEROY L. STEFONOWICZ
 Colonel, Air Corps,
 Commanding.

John S. Hopcock
 JOHN S. HOPCOCK,
 Lt. Colonel, Air Corps,

Francis J. Hoermann
 FRANCIS J. HOERMANN,
 Lt. Colonel, Air Corps,
 Acft. Accident Officer.

Charles L. Wagner
 CHARLES L. WAGNER,
 Major, Medical Spt.

Charles B. Hodges, Jr.
 CHARLES B. HODGES, JR.,
 Major, Air Corps.

Richard E. Prouty
 RICHARD E. PROUTY,
 Captain, Air Corps,
 Acft. Investigating Officer.

Signature _____
(Investigating Officer)

Date _____

725TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
451ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
APO 520 U.S. Army

11 March 1945.

ACCIDENT STATEMENT

On the evening of March 9, 1945 at approximately 1745 we were returning from a mission with a full load of bombs. All the flights from this Group returned to the base at approximately the same time and any flights that came over the field the tower was clearing to peel off and land. Landing was to the east, there was a rain cloud over the field at the time which cut down the visibility and made the runway as slippery as ice. The tower called all ships and told them to use extreme caution when landing as the runway was slippery and there was a cross wind from the left at 20 m.p.h. When our flight came in to peel off there were at least ten ships already in the pattern but we were cleared to peel off which we did. We were flying number four position, making us the fifth ship to land in our flight. Due to the large number of ships already in the pattern our flight had to increase the size of the pattern making much larger pattern than usual. Several times I lost sight of the field because of the poor visibility and the size of the pattern. About the time we were on the base leg the tower cleared another flight to peel off. When we were coming in on the final approach one of the ships of this other flight cut inside of us and was off to our left and about 100 ft. below us. He must have seen us coming in on the final approach because he pulled up his wheels and started to go around and the tower gave us the green light. As this ship pulled up to go around we passed directly behind him trying to get lined up straight with the runway. We hit his propwash while we were still about 200 feet off of the ground thus adding to the already very turbulent air. I was fighting the controls all the time trying to keep in line with the runway. I dropped my left wing to compensate for drift on the approach there was a ship landing about 1000 yards ahead of us and his prop wash was hitting us also. I was just on the verge of going around myself when the ship seemed to straighten up fairly well. Seeing that I could still land on the first third of the runway I eased off my power and made a normal landing. As soon as the ship touched the ground it began pulling to the left side of the runway. I had the throttles fully retracted and applied full right rudder but the ship was still pulling to the left. I began to ease on the right brake to try and straighten the ship up and still holding in right rudder. We must have been skidding along the runway because full right rudder and full right brake didn't help to straighten it out. So I applied full power on number one and two engines. Just as the ship started to straighten out the left tire caught on the left edge of the runway and blew out. That immediately turned the ship to the left at an angle of 90° to the runway. I applied full brake on both wheels and yelled at the copilot to cut the switches and the crash bar which he did. The co-pilot also shoved the mixture into idle cut-off. The combined results of full brakes and the soft mud at the side of the runway brought us to a sudden stop. The ship was sitting facing the north at an angle of 90° to the runway and the tail was about 10 feet off the edge of the matting. Oil around the Macelle of number 3 engine was burning, the engineer yelled fire, so we proceeded to

leave the ship with much haste. The bombardier opened the bomb bay doors and every one on the flight deck left the ship via the bomb bays and started running fearing the bombs would go off. I stopped long enough to grab the fire extinguisher on my way out. I was the last one to leave the ship. By the time I got out the fire on number 3 engine had gone out of its own accord.

All the men in the waist were out before the props had stopped turning over. One ship went by us before I got out and another came by just after I got out. I got back in the ship to call the tower to cease all landing operations because of the crack up. When I went back into the ship to call the tower I handed the very pistol along with two red flares to one of the crewman who in turn gave them to the O.D. The O.D. had arrived on the scenes several minutes before and when he got the Very Pistol he shot off a double red flare. As the radio was warming up I could hear the tower telling all ships to use extreme caution on landing as the runway was slippery and there was a cross wind from the left at 20 m.p.h. He never mentioned the crack up, evidently he was unaware that any thing was wrong. About this time some one began pounding on the side of the ship and yelling "Get out of the plane, there is another ship coming in". I cut the switches, the crash bar, got out of the ship and started running. When I got to what I thought was a safe distance I stopped and looked around. Ship # 36 was coming down the runway trying to miss our ship. I noticed that his left wheel was skidding, ie, not turning over at all. His left wing hit the tail of our ship slicing off both our rudders and vertical stabilizers just above the horizontal stabilizer. Just after his ship hit ours, his left tire blew out. He pulled off the left side of the runway.

After number 36 clipped our rudder and vertical stabilizer off the O.D. shot another double red flare. About a minute later number 40 came in for his landing. He started skidding about the same place we did and was headed off the runway straight for our ship. He must have seen that he could not stay on the runway because he applied left brake and full power on number 3 and 4 engines thus turning the ship in a circle to the left. His ship slid into our ship tail first, his fuselage striking the trailing edge of our left wing behind number 1 engine nacelle. All the men in ship 36 came streaming out, the men in the waist via the left waist window and the men on the flight deck via the bomb bay. The pilot of ship 36 did a very nice job, by turning to the left he undoubtedly saved the life of every one on the ship.

About this time the tower got on the ball and began sending the ships around. Several crash trucks, wreckers, and ambulances had arrived on the scene as well as about 100 men. Every time a ship came in on the approach everybody started to run for cover as all ships carried a full bomb load. The tower then reversed the direction of landing and four more ships landed.

No one was injured in any way. After all the ships had landed we all removed our personal equipment from the ships and were taken back to the squadron area in a truck.

William Silliman

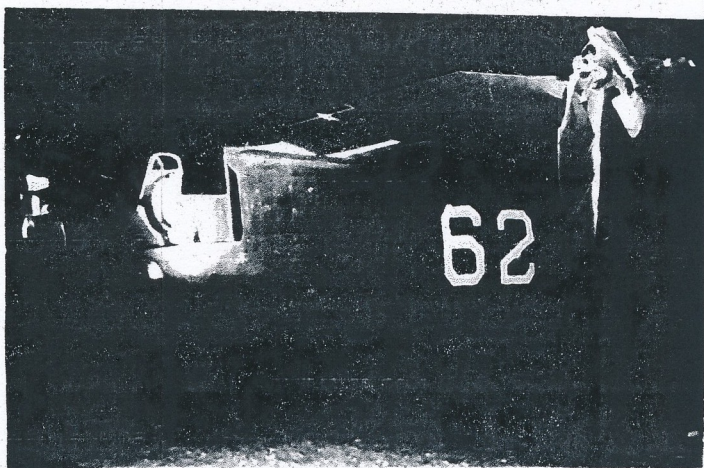
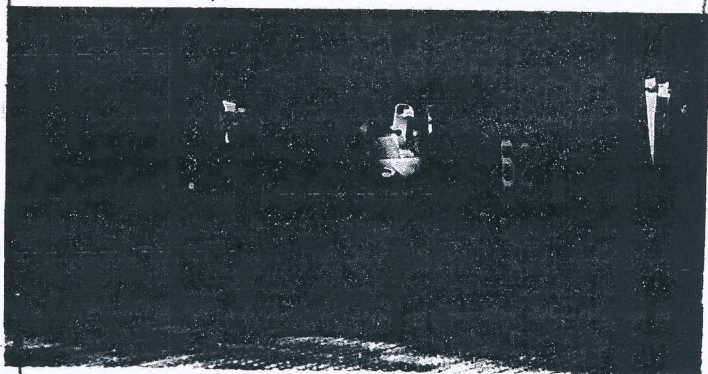
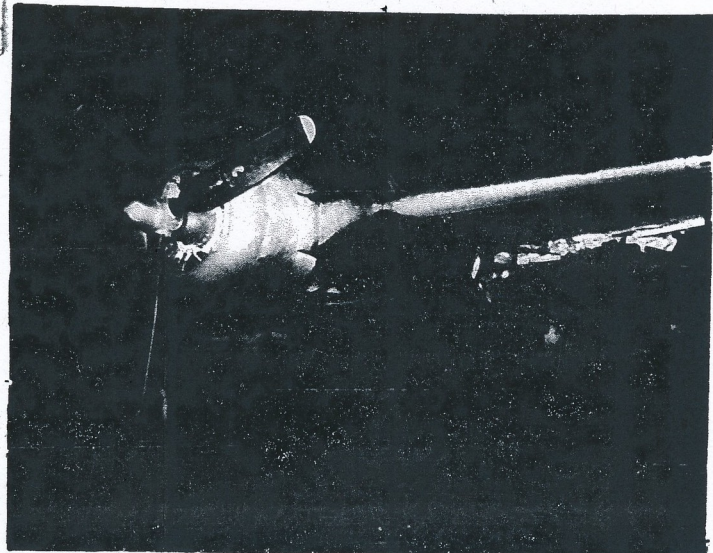
WILLIAM N. SILLIMAN
2nd Lt., AC

S T A T E M E N T

On the afternoon of 9 March 1945, we were returning from a combat mission in ship #62 with our bomb load. There was a thunder-storm over the field at the time of our return, making the visibility very poor.

As we were turning on our final approach, another ship, which had just peeled off, started to cut in ahead of us but turned out of our way and went around. Upon receiving a green light from the tower, we continued on our approach for a landing. Due to a rather stiff cross-wind and extreme turbulances, the pilot, Lt. Silliman, had difficulty in keeping control of the aircraft, although, he succeeded in making a normal landing. Just after the ship had touched the runway, it started going to the left so the pilot hit the right rudder but that did not seem to have any effect. He then applied the brakes to slow the ship down. Because of the slippery runway, we started skidding to the left and as the left tire hit the edge of the runway, it blew out; causing us to swerve off the left of the runway. All of the crew immediately got out of the ship as other ships were still coming in for landings. As ship #36 landed, it started skidding to the left and hit the tail of our ship as it passed by us. Ship #40 also started skidding to the left, after it had landed, and as it drew near to our ship it ground looped to the left. It's tail section hitting our left wing.

Carl B. Roberts
CARL B. ROBERTS
2nd Lt., AC
Co-Pilot



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

40-3-9-516

(1) Place Castelluccio, AF (2) Date 3-9-45 (3) Time 1804
 AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-24 (5) A. F. No. 42-51372 (6) Station Castelluccio AF
 Organization: (7) 15th AF (8) 451 BG (9) 725 Bomb Sqdn
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

DUTY	NAME	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	Silliman, William	P	0-777848	2nd Lt.	13	AC	15th AF	None	no
CP	Roberts, Carl B.	P	02052119	2nd Lt.	18	AC	"	"	"
P	Starron, Charles B.	W	02060114	2nd Lt.	18	AC	"	"	"
P	Green, Harold H.	B	0-771168	2nd Lt.	18	AC	"	"	"
E	Willis, Forrest G.	SG	1130795	3/SGT	38	AC	"	"	"
RO	Estabrooks, John	SG	1137698	3/SGT	38	AC	"	"	"
BC	Morton, Richard F.	SG	06759234	SGT	38	AC	"	"	"
MG	White, Bruce C.	SG	02948543	SGT	38	AC	"	"	"
TG	Berns, Laurence	SG	03714178	SGT	38	AC	"	"	"
NG	Katensaw, Arthur J.	SG	03767137	SGT	38	AC	"	"	"

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) Silliman, William (21) 0-777848 (22) 2nd Lt. (23) 13 (24) AC
 (Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
 Assigned (25) 15th AF (26) 451st BG (27) 725th Bomb Sq. (28) Castelluccio AF
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
 Attached for flying (29) _____ (30) _____ (31) _____ (32) _____
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
 Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 5-23-44 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 5-23-44 Instrument rating (37) 10-28-44
 (Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type	<u>B-24</u>	<u>199:50</u>	(42) Instrument time last 6 months	_____
(39) This model	<u>B-24D</u>	<u>108:15</u>	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	_____
(40) Last 90 days	_____	<u>112:25</u>	(44) Night time last 6 months	_____
(41) Total	_____	<u>602:15</u>	(45) Night time last 30 days	_____

no violations

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

NF

DAMAGE

(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS

(46) Aircraft	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(47) Engine(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(48) Propeller(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

(50) Weather at the time of accident 6/10 strato cumulus at 3,500 feet. Wind North 12 MPH. Variable Visibility 10 miles. Rain squall over field.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident _____
 (52) Cleared from _____ (53) To _____ (54) Kind of clearance 2

(55) Pilot's mission _____

(56) Nature of accident _____

(57) Cause of accident _____