

RESTRICTED
WAR DEPARTMENT

Accident No. _____

U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES
REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

3-22 41110
17001

4. 3 11
32

(1) Place Castelluccio Air Field (2) Date 3-7-45 (3) Time 1950
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-24J 10 (5) A. F. No. 42-51674 (6) Station Castelluccio Air Field
Organization: (7) 15th AF (8) 451st Bomb Gp (9) 727th Bomb Sq.
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)
PERSONNEL BIT Y169

DOVT	NAME (Last name first)	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	Blain, Robert A.	P	0-696316	2nd Lt	18	AC	15th	None	None
CP	Menein, Arthur D.	GP	0-720315	1st Lt	18	AC	15th	None	None
E	Winchester, Earl B.	E	12066684	S/Sgt	38	AAF	15th	None	None
NV	Gath, Raymond E.	NV	36602766	Sgt	38	AAF	15th	None	None

(20) Blain, Robert A. (21) 0-696316 (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 Bomb Gp (27) 727th Bomb Sq. (28) Castelluccio Air Field
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) _____ (30) _____ (31) _____ (32) Y169
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 11-3-43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 11-3-43 Instrument rating (37) _____
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

First Pilot Hours: (at the time of this accident) OP TO-1
(38) This type B-24 281:45 (42) Instrument time last 6 months _____
(39) This model B-24J 257:22 (43) Instrument time last 30 days _____
(40) Last 90 days 63:55 (44) Night time last 6 months 11:25
(41) Total 661:25 (45) Night time last 30 days 0:00

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE NE

DAMAGE	(46) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(48) Aircraft <u>Minor MAJORS 3</u>	Nose section underside, station 0.1 to 4.0.
(49) Engine(s)	Skin and bulkheads.
(50) Propeller(s)	

(51) Weather at the time of accident Overcast at 3 to 4,000 feet. Visibility, 9 miles. Wind, NW at 9 MPH.
(52) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident NO
(53) Cleared from Castelluccio (54) To Castelluccio (55) Kind of clearance Local
(56) Pilot's mission Test flight of AFCE and Radar equipment.

(57) Nature of accident Landing IV N
(58) Cause of accident Nose wheel collapsed after landing.

(59) Yes. CONFIDENTIAL
BY JSA
ON 3-10-45

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

NARRATIVE STATEMENT

The pilot placed gear lever in down position on down wind leg of pattern. Gear went down and engineer checked it for locked position. Gear handle returned to neutral and green light indicated gear "locked". A normal landing was made with nose held off til air speed was lost. Then nose wheel was felt to touch runway, hold for a second, then slowly give away, letting nose section contact runway.

Investigation showed nose wheel gear unlocked and wheel just inside of fuselage. No pictures of gear from inside available.

RESPONSIBILITY

Board places responsibility on material failure 100%.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Unsatisfactory Report being submitted.

Leroy E. Stepanowicz
LEROY E. STEPANOWICZ,
Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding.

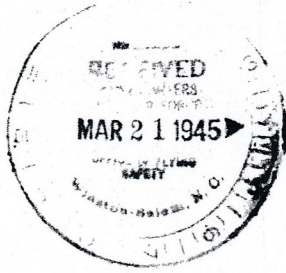
John S. Hoppock
JOHN S. HOPPOCK
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps.

Clair L. Wagner
CLAIR L. WAGNER,
Major, Medical Dpt.

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

Francis J. Hoermann
FRANCIS J. HOERMANN,
Major, Air Corps,
Act. Accident Officer.

Richard E. Prooty
RICHARD E. PROOTY
Captain, Air Corps,
Act. Investigating Officer.



Signature _____
(Investigating Officer)

Date _____

STATION		ORGANIZATION	
AFO 520, New York, N.Y.		451st Bombardment Group (H)	
SUBJECT OF REPORT	Property Class—Name	Manufacturer	AAF Order or Shipping No.
AIRCRAFT—Model & AAF Serial No.		ENGINE—Model & AAF Serial No.	
B-24J 42-51674		UNIT OR ACCESSORY—Type, Model and Serial No.	
ADDITIONAL REPORTS ONLY	LAST S. I. R.—Depot	Date	Flying Time Since
	LAST OVERHAUL—Depot	Hours Since	Total Flying Time
PREVIOUS REPORTS ONLY	Deposits and Hours At Each Previous Overhaul		Part Drawing, Serial and Specification No.
	Name		
Time in Use	Quantity on Hand	Quantity Known Defective	No. Previous Failures
Inspected by "X" (Signature of Exhbit)		Photographed and Prints Enclosed <input type="checkbox"/>	Kept for Instructions <input type="checkbox"/>
		Kept Under Separate Cover <input type="checkbox"/>	Kept in Attached Package <input type="checkbox"/>
		Expired and Returned to Service <input type="checkbox"/>	Replaced of (English Below) <input type="checkbox"/>
		No Overhaul Facility (OFFICIAL) <input type="checkbox"/>	

GIVE COMPLETE DETAILS, PROBABLE CAUSES AND RECOMMENDATIONS BELOW:
(Use Only Applicable Spaces Above—Avoid Unnecessary Repetition)

EXPEDITE

- DESCRIPTION OF TROUBLE:** Aircraft B-24J 42-51674 was flying on a test hop after dark. After an hour flight time the pilot made a normal landing. Near the end of the roll on the runway, the nose gear slowly retracted, resulting in minor damage to the underside of the nose section. Thorough inspection and investigation following the accident failed to reveal damage to the gear, nor was any maladjustment of the retracting mechanism found to be existent.
- HISTORICAL DATA:** Total aircraft time, 522:00 hours.
- CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:** Aircraft turned over to 60th Air Service Squadron for repair.
- PREVIOUS REPORTS:** None.
- REMARKS:** It is believed that either of two possible failures may have occurred. Since the engineer stated that the nose gear was down and locked and this statement was corroborated by the pilot who said that his panel light was on, it is possible that a presence of air in the hydraulic lines of the nose gear actuating system resulted in a sluggish action of the gear, in which case this would contribute to a pressure surge in the main landing gear system, locking that gear and returning the selector handle to the neutral position. If this occurred at such a time when the down lock on the nose gear was just barely engaged, in the darkness this may have been overlooked by the engineer. The shock of landing may then have disengaged the down lock. A dirty or sticking restrictor valve could cause the same condition, of a not completely engaged down-lock.

Howard D. Schmitt
HOWARD D. SCHMITT,
 Major, Air Corps,
 Group Engineering Officer.

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ROUTING

SEND ORIGINAL AND TWO COPIES FIRST TO COMMANDING OFFICER, HQ. AIR SERVICE ENGINEER, PATTERSON FIELD, NEWARK, CALIF.

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727TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
APO 520 U S Army

9 March 1945

STATEMENT

On March 7, 1945, at approximately 1850, I took off from Castelluccio Air Base in Airplane #42-51674 to test hop, check formation stick and check radar equipment.

I climbed to 12,000 feet, completed checks and started a let down. At approximately 1945 entered pattern, made a wide downwind leg and let the gear down. Engineer reported gear down and locked at about time I was turning on base leg. Light was also lit for wheels down. Continued regular landing procedure as everything was normal. Touched main gear first and held the nose up until it came down from lack of airspeed. Nose wheel touched as usual and then collapsed. Ship went straight for considerable distance, then veered slightly to the left and came to a stop with just the nose and left main gear off the runway.

Robert A. Blain

ROBERT A. BLAIN,
2nd Lt., Air Corps,
Pilot.

727TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
APO 520 U S Army

9 March 1945

STATEMENT

On March 7, 1945 at approximately 1950, the undersigned was acting as Engineer on airplane #42-51674.

We came over the field and put the wheels down. I went back to the waist and checked the main gear to see that they came down and locked. After they were down and locked, I returned to check the nose wheel. I unfastened the covering of the nose wheel and it was down and locked. I returned to the flight deck and told the pilot all wheels were down and locked. We made a good landing. The nose wheel seemed to hold for a few seconds, then it seemed to retract slowly. Within a few seconds the plane was on its nose and finally came to a stop.

Earl B. Winchester
EARL B. WINCHESTER,
S/Sgt, 12066684.

RC # 18

