

**CONFIDENTIAL RESTRICTED**

Accident No. 437424-30

WAR DEPARTMENT  
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

7-19

**REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT**

31

1300Z

(1) Place Maples Area -- Island of Capri (2) Date 24 April 1945 (3) Time 1300Z  
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-24H (5) A. F. No. 42-64489 (6) Station Castelluccio, Italy  
Organization: (7) 15 AF (8) 451 BH (9) 725 BH (10) 725 BH  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Squadron)

**PERSONNEL**

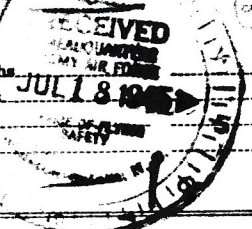
DDTY (10)	NAME (Last name first) (11)	RATING (12)	SERIAL NO. (13)	RANK (14)	PERSONNEL CLASS (15)	BRANCH (16)	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND (17)	RESULT TO PERSONNEL (18)	USE OF PARACHUTE (19)
P	Fish, Kendall K.	P	0-822126	Capt.	18	AC	15 AF	Missing	None
CP	Gold, Thomas A.	P	0-833435	2nd Lt.	18	AC	15 AF	Fatal	None
CP	Burley, Robert G.		35222306	T/Sgt.	38	AC	15 AF	Missing	None
XG	Murdoch, Edward V.		219715	1st Officer (IP)				Fatal	None
	(United States Civilian Seaman Contracted by the War Department)								
X	Schneider, William B.		7544723	Jr. Marine Officer (Engine)				Missing	None
	(United States Civilian Seaman Contracted by the War Department)								
	Attached statements also indicate the presence of T/Sgt. James R. Mack, 35282172, and Joseph H. Prest, a civilian with a USO Unit, who have been missing since the day of the accident.								

**PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT**

(20) Fish, Kendall K. (21) 0-822126 (22) Captain (23) 18 AC  
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)  
Assigned (25) 15 AF (26) 451 BH (27) 725 BH (28) Castelluccio, Italy  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
Attached for flying (29) 15 AF SAME (30) 451 BH (31) 725 BH (32) Castelluccio, Italy  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
Original rating (33) P (34) 12 Mar 44 Present rating (35) P (36) 12 Mar 44 Instrument rating (37) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date)

**FIRST PILOT HOURS:**

(at the time of this accident)  
(38) This type 423:20 (42) Instrument time last 6 months \_\_\_\_\_  
(39) This model 28:45 (43) Instrument time last 30 days \_\_\_\_\_  
(40) Last 90 days 160:30 (44) Night time last 6 months \_\_\_\_\_  
(41) Total 806:25 (45) Night time last 30 days \_\_\_\_\_



**AIRCRAFT DAMAGE**

DAMAGE	(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft	Left wing torn off, aircraft exploded and sank into deep water. Efforts to recover the aircraft were unsuccessful.
(47) Engine(s)	
(48) Propeller(s)	

(50) Weather at the time of accident Visibility: Seven (7) miles, Ceiling: Three Thousand (3,000) feet with scattered clouds, Wind: South at seven (7) miles per hour.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No.  
(52) Cleared from Capodichino, Italy (53) to Local (54) Kind of clearance CFR

(55) Pilot's mission Local Test  
**CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED OR CHANGED TO RESTRICTED**

(56) Nature of accident Aircraft hit island, and crashed into the sea  
**CG AAF**

(57) Cause of accident Pilot flying too close to surface and collided with island while turning. No apparent malfunction of plane according to witnesses.

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7-19-45

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## DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

On 24 April 1945 at approximately 1300Z hours, B-24H Serial Number 42-64489, was "buzzing" the Isle of Capri. The aircraft struck the Island, sheared off the left wing and crashed into the Sea about one hundred (100) yards off shore at the Southwest corner of the Island. (See attached Maps)

Witnesses say there was no apparent malfunction of the plane and that the aircraft exploded and sank almost immediately after contact. Total responsibility falls upon the pilot since the crash occurred as a result of his poor judgement and failure to observe existing Flying Regulations.

The Board recommends that pilots be more thoroughly cautioned about the hazards of low flying and be shown the necessity for strict observance of Flying Regulations.

III C 07

Signature *J. R. Hucker*  
(Investigating Officer)  
J. R. HUCKER, Captain, Air Corps.  
*Bert S. Davenport*  
BERT S. DAVENPORT, 1st Lt., Air Corps.  
*James C. Pitts*  
JAMES C. PITTS, 1st Lt., Air Corps.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## STATEMENT

14 June 1945

1. The following are the attempts made by the Aircraft Accident Investigating Committee of Air Force General Depot #3, APO 528, to salvage B-24H, Serial Number 42-64489, which crashed off the Isle of Capri at approximately 1300Z hours on 24 April 1945.

- A. The Aircraft Accident Investigating Committee together with 8th Port British personnel visited the scene of the accident and took soundings to determine the depth of the water, which was found to be approximately two hundred (200) feet deep.
- B. Efforts were made to get local British and Italian salvage divers to go down, but this was impossible as their equipment will not permit them to dive deeper than sixty (60) feet.
- C. Efforts were made to get a U.S. Navy diving ship which had been stationed at Cran, but it had returned to the United States.
- D. An attempt was made to secure British equipment which was reported to be either in Genoa or Malta, but this attempt was unsuccessful.
- E. The project was then referred to Higher Command for possible action.

2. As all known possibilities to recover the aircraft and the bodies have been exhausted, the Board feels justified in closing the investigation at this time.

*J. R. Bucher*  
J. R. BUCHER,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
President of Board.

*Bert S. Davenport*  
BERT S. DAVENPORT,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Board Member.

*James C. Pitts*  
JAMES C. PITTS,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Board Member.

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## STATEMENT

9 June 1945

1. On 24 April 1945, at approximately 1300Z hours, B-24H Serial Number 42-64489, belonging to the 451 Bomb Group (H), crashed into the Sea near the Southwestern corner of the Island of Capri. From the investigation made by the Aircraft Accident Investigating Committee of Air Force General Depot #3, APO 528, the following facts are submitted;

- A. Two (2) bodies were recovered and identified immediately after the crash. These bodies were those of 2nd Lt. THOMAS A GOLD, O-833435, of the 451 Bomb Group (H), and EDWARD V. MURDOCK, an American Civilian Seaman who had been contracted by the War Department, and who had been working with the Army Transportation Corps.
- B. Listed on the clearance as Pilot, Engineer, and Passenger respectively were Captain KENDALL K. FISH, O-822126, and T/Sgt. ROBERT G. BURLEY, 35222306, both of the 451 Bomb Group (H), and WILLIAM B. SCHNEIDER, another American Civilian Seaman who had been working with the Army Transportation Corps. Only the last names were written on the clearance and those of BURLEY and SCHNEIDER were misspelled.
- C. Believed to have been on the Aircraft were T/Sgt. JAMES R. MACK, 35282172, of the 2698 Technical Supervision Regiment, and JOSEPH H. PREST known as HAROLD DIAMOND, a Civilian with a USO Unit. Although their names were not listed on the clearance, nor were their bodies recovered, statements by witnesses make their presence on the aircraft an almost certainty. (See Certificate made by Captain SAMUEL G. POST). T/Sgt. JAMES R. MACK was known to have been with EDWARD V. MURDOCK and WILLIAM B. SCHNEIDER, and a U.S. Army Weapons Carrier which he had been driving was found parked in front of the Base Operations Building at Capocchiair Airfield on 25 April 1945, the day following the accident.

*J. R. Bucher*  
J. R. BUCHER,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
President of Board.

*Bert S. Davenport*  
BERT S. DAVENPORT,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Board Member.

*James C. Pitts*  
JAMES C. PITTS,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Board Member.

end. 3.

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## CERTIFICATE

ON THE 24TH OF APRIL 1945 AT APPROXIMATELY 1430 HOURS, I, SAMUEL G. POST, O-569809, CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS, WAS SITTING ON THE STEPS OF THE BASE OPERATIONS BUILDING AT CAPODICHINO AIRDROME, NAPLES, ITALY. WHILE I WAS SITTING THERE, LT. TOMMY GOLD AND HAROLD DIAMOND, (BOTH ACQUAINTANCES OF MINE) CAME INTO THE BASE OPERATIONS BUILDING, PRESUMEDLY TO MAKE A CLEARANCE. THEY, WITH SEVERAL OTHER MEN, LEFT BASE OPERATIONS AND ENTERED A B-24 TYPE AIRCRAFT, AND TAXIED DOWN TAXI STRIP FOR A TAKE-OFF.

WHILE THEY WERE LEAVING BASE OPERATIONS, I SPOKE TO BOTH LT. GOLD AND MR. DIAMOND. I GATHERED THAT THEY WERE GOING UP FOR A LOCAL TEST HOP. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE B-24 TOOK OFF I LEFT AND HAVE SEEN NONE OF THE PERSONNEL WHO ENTERED THE SHIP SINCE.

/s/ SAMUEL G. POST  
SAMUEL G. POST, O-569809,  
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS  
HQ. 321ST BOMB. GROUP (M),  
APO - 650 - U.S. ARMY.

WITNESSED BY

/s/ GILMER M. HICKMAN, JR.  
CAPTAIN, INFANTRY.

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

*Walter H. Baker, Jr.*

WALTER H. BAKER, JR.,  
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS,  
BASE OPERATIONS OFFICER.

*encl 4*

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## S T A T E M E N T

4 MAY 1945

ON APRIL 24, 1945 ABOUT 1330 AT THE TERMINUS HOTEL, NAPLES, ITALY, I CAME UP FROM THE DINING ROOM AND MET MY BROTHER, HAROLD. HE WAS TALKING TO A YOUNG MAN WHO WAS IN THE ARMY AIR FORCE. MY BROTHER INTRODUCED ME TO THIS YOUNG MAN. HE WAS 2ND LT. THOMAS GOLD. GOLD INVITED ME ON A FLIGHT IN A B-24 WHICH MY WIFE AND I REFUSED.

ABOUT A HALF HOUR LATER I TOOK A FEW THEATRE COSTUMES TO MY BROTHER'S ROOM. WE TALKED ABOUT THE FLIGHT AND I TOLD MY BROTHER TO FORGET IT. AT THIS POINT, THOMAS GOLD CAME INTO MY BROTHER'S ROOM AND TOLD MYSELF AND MY BROTHER THAT THE FLIGHT WAS OFF. THIS WAS THE LAST I SAW LT. GOLD OR MY BROTHER, HAROLD. I DID SEE MY BROTHER WITH NORMAN MURDOCK WHO I HAD ALSO MET. ALSO IN THE SAME PARTY WAS A FELLOW BY THE NAME OF SCHNEIDER. THE PARTY WAS KNOWN TO HAVE LEFT THE TERMINUS HOTEL IN A WEAPONS CARRIER.

/S/ HUGH PREST  
HUGH PREST KNOWN AS  
HUGH DIAMOND.  
/S/ HUGH DIAMOND

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

*Walter H. Baker, Jr.*

WALTER H. BAKER, JR.,  
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS,  
BASE OPERATIONS OFFICER.

*encl 5*

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## STATEMENT

25 APRIL 1945

ON TUESDAY, 24 APRIL 1945, AT APPROXIMATELY 1500 HOURS, I WAS IN A MOTOR BOAT WITH THREE OTHER OFFICERS. WE HAD LEFT THE "GREEN GROTTA" A FEW MINUTES EARLIER AND WERE MOVING WESTWARD.

I HEARD SOMEONE IN THE BOAT YELL, LOOKED UP, AND SAW A B-24 WHICH SEEMED TO STRIKE THE ROCKS JUST BELOW THE LIGHTHOUSE AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE ISLAND. THE LEFT WING SHEARED OFF, THE PLANE ROLLED TO THE LEFT, AND PLUNGED INTO THE WATER. IT EXPLODED AS IT STRUCK THE WATER. THE ONLY THING TO MARK THE SPOT AT FIRST WAS BURNING GASOLINE.

IT TOOK ABOUT FIVE (5) MINUTES FOR OUR BOAT TO REACH THE AREA. BY THAT TIME THERE WAS QUITE A BIT OF STUFF FLOATING AROUND, MOSTLY OXYGEN CYLINDERS AND PARTS OF GAS TANKS. A FEW MINUTES LATER, WE SPOTTED ONE (1) BODY, FLOATING, ALMOST COMPLETELY SUBMERGED.

OUR BOATMAN TOLD US THAT THERE WAS A RED CROSS SPEEDBOAT THAT WOULD PROBABLY SOON BE ON THE SCENE. WE DECIDED TO GET TO THE NEAREST TELEPHONE TO MAKE SURE THAT THE PROPER AUTHORITIES WERE NOTIFIED OF THE ACCIDENT. WE HAD ONE OF SEVERAL ITALIAN BOATMEN IN THE VICINITY PLACE THE BODY, AND ONE (1) OTHER BODY WHICH HE HAD LOCATED, IN HIS ROWBOAT.

WE WENT TO THE LIGHTHOUSE, TELEPHONED, AND WERE TOLD TO BRING THE BODIES IN. WE WENT BACK, COVERED THE BODIES WITH A PARACHUTE WE HAD FISHED OUT OF THE WATER, AND STARTED TO TOW THE ROWBOAT TO THE DOCK AT CAPRI.

AFTER A TIME, A BRITISH AIR/SEA RESCUE BOAT (171) FROM ISCHIA CAME UP TO US. THE BOAT COMMANDER TOOK CHARGE FROM THAT POINT. HE TOOK EVERYTHING ABOARD HIS BOAT, BROUGHT US TO CAPRI, WROTE DOWN OUR STORIES, AND THEN LEFT FOR ISCHIA WITH THE BODIES AND EVERYTHING ELSE THAT WAS PICKED UP.

/s/ SOL I. COURTMAN  
SOL I. COURTMAN, O-462562  
1ST LT., AIR CORPS.

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

*Walter H. Baker, Jr.*  
WALTER H. BAKER, JR.,  
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS,  
BASE OPERATIONS OFFICER.

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## STATEMENT

25 APRIL 1945

ON THE 24TH OF APRIL 1945 WHILE MOTOR-BOATING IN THE VICINITY OF THE "GREEN GROTTO", I WAS IN A POSITION TO OBSERVE AN AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT. THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION IS AS I RECALL IT:

AN UNIDENTIFIED B-24 WAS SEEN TO STRIKE THE ISLAND SLIGHTLY WEST OF THE LIGHTHOUSE ON THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE ISLAND. THE LEFT WING HIT AND SEEMED TO BE SHEARED OFF. IMMEDIATELY THE PLANE "SPUN" TO THE LEFT AND CRASHED INTO THE WATER. AN EXPLOSION OCCURRED, AND IT WAS APPROXIMATELY FOUR (4) MINUTES BEFORE WE COULD BEGIN A SEARCH FOR THE WRECKAGE. NO LIVING SURVIVORS WERE TO BE SEEN IN THE VICINITY.

WE THEN PROCEEDED TO THE LIGHTHOUSE IN ORDER TO PHONE THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE ISLAND. WE WERE INSTRUCTED TO SEARCH FOR ANY BODIES AND TRANSPORT THEM TO THE DOCK AT CAPRI.

WITH THE COOPERATION OF NATIVE FISHERMEN, TWO (2) BODIES WERE LOCATED AND PLACED IN A ROW-BOAT. WE THEN PROCEEDED TO THE DOCK. SHORTLY AFTERWARDS, WE WERE MET BY THE BRITISH AIR/SEA RESCUE BOAT, WHICH TOOK CHARGE OF THE SITUATION. THE BODIES AND OTHER SALVAGED MATERIALS WERE PLACED ABOARD, IN CHARGE OF THE BRITISH O.C. WE THEN SEARCHED THE AREA AGAIN BUT COULD FIND NO OTHER BODIES. AT THIS TIME, THE SEARCH WAS DIRECTED BY THE BRITISH O.C.

THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT IS PLACED AT APPROXIMATELY 1500 HOURS, 24 APRIL 1945. STATEMENTS WERE GIVEN TO THE ASR OFFICER, AND THE TWO (2) BODIES, TOGETHER WITH THE SALVAGE, WERE LEFT IN HIS CHARGE.

/s/ THOMAS B. GORMAN, JR.  
THOMAS B. GORMAN, JR., O-571815  
1ST LT., AIR CORPS.

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

*Walter H. Baker, Jr.*  
WALTER H. BAKER, JR.,  
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS,  
BASE OPERATIONS OFFICER.

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## STATEMENT

25 APRIL 1945

I HAD JUST LEFT THE GREEN GROTTO AND THE TIME WAS APPROXIMATELY 1500 HOURS, 24 APRIL 1945, WHEN I SAW THE B-24, FLYING VERY LOW, HIT THE ROCKS BY THE LIGHTHOUSE--RIPPING OFF THE LEFT WING OF THE PLANE. THE SHIP ROLLED OVER TO THE LEFT AND HIT THE WATER ON ITS BACK, EXPLODING UPON IMPACT WITH THE WATER--APPROXIMATELY 1,500 FEET FROM US.

WE PROCEEDED TO THE SCENE, AND AFTER PICKING UP TWO (2) BODIES, WHICH WERE THE ONLY PART OF THE CREW WE COULD FIND, WERE PICKED UP BY A BRITISH AIR/SEA RESCUE UNIT AND BROUGHT TO CAPRI. THE BRITISH KEPT EVERYTHING INCLUDING TECH ORDERS WE FOUND FLOATING.

IN THE WRECKAGE, WE FOUND ONE (1) NAVAL OFFICER'S HAT, ONE (1) ARMY OFFICER'S CAP, AND ONE (1) ENLISTED ARMY MAN'S CAP.

THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED SO QUICKLY THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL IF THERE WERE ANY MALFUNCTIONING OF THE PLANE.

/s/ REX GROZIER  
REX GROZIER, O-672078  
1ST LT., AIR CORPS.

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

*Walter H. Baker, Jr.*

WALTER H. BAKER, JR.,  
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS,  
BASE OPERATIONS OFFICER.

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## STATEMENT

25. APRIL 1945

THREE OTHER OFFICERS AND MYSELF WERE RIDING IN A BOAT NEAR THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE ISLAND—ABOUT 100 YARDS OFFSHORE. I HAPPENED TO LOOK UP AHEAD AND THERE SAW A B-24 LIBERATOR ROLLING OVER ON ITS BACK WITH MOST OF THE LEFT WING SHEARED OFF. THE PLANE REMAINED ON ITS BACK AND WENT INTO THE SEA, WHERE IT EXPLODED IMMEDIATELY.

WE WENT TO THE SPOT, WHICH WAS ABOUT 1,000 FEET FROM US, TO GIVE ASSISTANCE TO ANY POSSIBLE SURVIVORS. WE PICKED UP TWO BODIES AND PROCEEDED BACK TO THE PORT.

THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED SO QUICKLY THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO NOTE IF THERE WERE ANY MALFUNCTIONING OF THE PLANE.

/s/ HENRY D. CHARTIER  
HENRY D. CHARTIER, O-2063975  
2ND LT., AIR CORPS.

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

*Walter H. Baker, Jr.*  
WALTER H. BAKER, JR.,  
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS,  
BASE OPERATIONS OFFICER.

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24TH APRIL 1945

EXTRACTS FROM DUTY OFFICER'S LOG BOOK (AIRCRAFT SAFETY CENTRE, WEST ITALY)

ON UNKNOWN B-24 WHICH DITCHED OFF SOUTH COAST OF ISLAND OF CAPRI, AT APPROXIMATELY 1510 HOURS

TIME	REF.	DETAIL	REMARKS
1510	DITCHING	CONTROLLER 335 WING PHONES TO SAY HE HAS INTERCEPTED A MESSAGE FROM AN UNKNOWN AIRCRAFT S FOR SUGAR TO BIG FENCE - "AIRCRAFT JUST CRASHED INTO SEA OFF CAPRI". WE WERE ABLE TO GET AN APPROXIMATE BEARING ON HIM OF 175 DEGREES. MORE INFORMATION WILL FOLLOW.	
1511	:	FROM CONTROLLER - THE FIX WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET IS ONLY 2ND CLASS BUT PLACES THE DITCHING APPROXIMATELY 1 MILE SOUTH OF CAPRI. GRID - Y3114.	
1512	:	FROM CONTROLLER - AIRCRAFT S (SUGAR) REPORTS THE DITCHING APPROXIMATELY 300 YARDS OFF SOUTH COAST OF CAPRI.	
1513	:	FROM CONTROLLER - A/C S SUGAR IS REQUESTING PERMISSION TO LEAVE VICINITY. AIRCRAFT SAFETY CENTRE INSTRUCTED HIM TO STAND-BY UNTIL HSL ARRIVED ON SCENE, AND ASKED SECTOR CONTROLLER TO CONTACT ISCHIA, TO SEND LAUNCH WITH ALL SPEED TO POSITION. MEANWHILE, 284 SQUADRON HAS BEEN ORDERED TO SEND OUT A WARWICK, BUT THERE IS NO AVAILABLE AIRCRAFT SERVICEABLE, TWO AIRCRAFT BEING EMPLOYED ELSEWHERE.	
1515	:	BOTH CONTROLLER M.A.C.A.F. AND GROUP CAPTAIN ECCLES HAVE BEEN INFORMED.	
1530	:	FROM CONTROLLER - THE A/C WHICH HAS DITCHED IS A B-24. THE A/C WHICH IS STILL ORBITING THE WRECK IS ALSO A B-24. THE HSL SHOULD BE WELL ON ITS WAY TO CAPRI NOW. IT WAS ORDERED OFF NEARLY TWENTY MINUTES AGO. THE NAVY HAVE MANAGED TO CONTACT SOME AMERICANS ON THE ISLAND AND ASKED THEM TO RENDER WHAT ASSISTANCE THEY CAN.	
1535	:	CONTROLLER MACAF INFORMED OF PROCEEDINGS TO DATE. GROUP CAPTAIN ECCLES IS WITH THE CONTROLLER 335 WING.	

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(EXTRACTS FROM DUTY OFFICER'S LOG BOOK (AIRCRAFT SAFETY CENTRE, WEST ITALY) DTD 24 APRIL 1945, CONT'D)

TIME	REF.	DETAIL	REMARKS
1540	DITCHING		FROM CONTROLLER: 284 SQUADRON HAVE NOW ONE AIRCRAFT SERVICEABLE - IT HAS BEEN ORDERED OFF TO RELIEVE THE B-24 STILL STANDING BY. MACAF INFORMED.
1554	:		FROM CONTROLLER - B-24 S SUGAR REPORTS LARGE OIL PATCH ON FIRE - CROWDS ON BEACH. WARWICK PLAINSONG W WILLIAM NOW AIRBORNE, AND B-24 S SUGAR RELEASED AND HANDED OVER TO BIG FENCE.
1556	:		284 SQUADRON STILL HAVE NO OTHER AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE YET.
1600	: B-24/489		FROM BASE OPS. CAPODICHINO. - CAPO REPORTS THIS AIRCRAFT WAS AIRBORNE AT 1447B FOR HALF HOUR AIRTEST FLIGHT AND OVERDUE. CALL SIGN - TODAY "J" - JIG. ASC SEES POSSIBILITY OF THIS BEING THE AIRCRAFT DITCHED, AND INFORM CAPO OF THE POSSIBILITY, BUT STRESS IT MAY NOT BE SO. WILL CONFIRM LATER. CAPO SAY THAT NO. 489 LANDED THIS MORNING WITH ROPEY ENGINE, HENCE THE TEST FLIGHT.
1619	DITCHING		FROM PLAINSONG W WILLIAM - SIGNAL RECEIVED "AM RETURNING TO BASE". ASKED CONTROLLER IF THIS IS SO, BUT THE CONTROLLER SAYS THAT THOUGH HSL IS THERE HE HAS ASKED THE WARWICK TO REMAIN LONGER.
1640	:		WARWICK PLAINSONG WILLIAM LANDED.
1641	:		FROM BASE OPS. CAPO - HAVING ASKED THEM FOR THE NUMBER OF CREW ON B-24/489 - THEY REPORT THE FOLLOWING: - CREW OF FOUR - LT. FISCH; GOLD; BURLY; SNYDER. HOME BASE - CASTELLUCCIO, 451 (B) GROUP.
1655	: B-24/489		THROUGH AIRCRAFT SAFETY CENTRE, EAST ITALY, CHECKED WITH 451 (B) GROUP. THIS AIRCRAFT HAS NOT RETURNED TO CASTELLUCCIO. 15TH AIR FORCE ASK US TO KEEP THEM INFORMED.
1700	DITCHING		FROM CONTROLLER - HSL 171 IS NOW RETURNING TO BASE. NO MORE NEWS AVAILABLE YET, EXCEPT TWO MUTILATED BODIES HAVE BEEN PICKED UP.
1755	:		FROM CAPO - WE HAVE RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM A REST CAMP TO THE EFFECT THAT THE CRASHED AIRCRAFT OFF CAPRI WAS B-24 NO: G. 42-78201. TWO BODIES PICKED UP AND TAKEN TO 252 ASRU BY LAUNCH. INFORMED CONTROLLER. IT IS AGREED TO AWAIT FURTHER CONFIRMATION OF THE NUMBER FROM THE HSL.

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(EXTRACTS FROM DUTY OFFICER'S LOG BOOK (AIRCRAFT SAFETY CENTRE,  
WEST ITALY) DTD 24 APRIL 1945, CONT'D)

TIME	REF.	DETAIL	REMARKS
1758	DITCHING	HSL 171 GIVES HIS ETA AT ISCHIA AS 1810 HOURS B TIME.	
1810	:	FROM CONTROLLER - HSL 171 HAS NOT PUT IN AT ISCHIA BUT IS UNDER SAIL DIRECT TO SANTA LEUCIA HARBOUR, NAPLES - EAT 1900 HOURS. REQUEST AMERICAN AMBULANCE TO MEET IT. ASKED CONTROLLER TO CONTACT NOIC, NAPLES TO HAVE A REPRESENTATIVE TO MEET LAUNCH TO COLLECT FULL INFORMATION ON DITCHING FROM O.C. LAUNCH, AND TO CONTACT AN AMERICAN HOSPITAL IN NAPLES FOR AMBULANCE.	
1905	:	FROM CONTROLLER.- THE CAPTAIN OF HSL 171 HAS PHONED HIM AND REPORTS HE HAS AS YET OBTAINED NO IDENTIFICATION OF AIRCRAFT OR BODIES - THERE IS STILL A LOT OF WRECKAGE DRIFTING ABOUT - SOME OF IT STILL BURNING. NO TAGS FOUND ON BODIES. BOATS IN THE AREA - ITALIAN AND OTHER- WISE - WERE STILL LEFT SEARCHING. THERE WAS NO AMERICAN AMBULANCE TO MEET THE LAUNCH - THIS, IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT THE PBS WERE ALSO ASKED TO SEE THAT ONE WAS DISPATCHED. IT HAS NOW BEEN ASCERTAINED THAT THE B-24 WHICH CRASHED HAD BEEN BEATING UP THE ISLAND OF CAPRI AND ONE WING TIP STRUCK A CORNER OF A LIGHTHOUSE, FROM WHICH IT NEVER RECOVERED.	
1920	:	THE SKIPPER OF HSL 171 WANTS TO KNOW WHETHER HE IS TO HAND OVER PERSONNEL EFFECTS FOUND ON THE BODIES TO THE AMBULANCE. INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN ARE "NO - KEEP THEM UNTIL WE ASCERTAIN THE RIGHT AUTHORITIES".	
1925	:	CONTROLLER REPORTS VIA LAUNCH - BODIES RECOVERED ARE THOSE OF :- (1) <u>MURDOCH EDWARD VARICK.</u> OCCUPATION - MASTER CLERK, B. ARMY TRANSPORT S. (2) <u>THOMAS ALAN GOLD.</u> 2ND/LT. AIR CORPS - FROM FLORIDA. THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PASSED ON TO CAPO- DICHINO TO CHECK ON IDENTITIES, IF POSSIBLE.	

NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT OBTAINED FROM LOG BOOKS-  
B-24 / G42 / 78236.

DINGHY NO: 41069.

ALL THIS INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM IDENTITY  
CARDS AND LOG BOOK.

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(EXTRACTS FROM DUTY OFFICER'S LOG BOOK (AIRCRAFT SAFETY CENTRE,  
WEST ITALY) DTD 24 APRIL 1946, CONT'D)

TIME	REF.	DETAIL	REMARKS
1945	DITCHING	INFORMED ASC. EAST ITALY OF NEW FACTS AND ASKED THEM TO CHECK WITH 451 (B) GROUP.	
1950	:	CONTROLLER REPORTS HSL 171 IS ANXIOUS TO RETURN TO ISCHIA TONIGHT, BUT IS STILL WAITING TO DISPOSE OF BODIES.	
2005	:	CONTROLLER MACAF INFORMED OF POSITION TO DATE.	
2035	:	F/O HUNT, ASRU, ISCHIA PHONED TO INFORM US THAT WITNESSES TO THE DITCHING WERE :- 1/LT. GROZIER, 1/LT. GONNAN, 1/LT. COURTMAN, 2/LT. CHARTRES - ALL OF 455 (B) GROUP, USAAF.	
		THESE OFFICERS STATE THAT A/C NO. 4278201 WAS FLYING PAST THE SOUTH SIDE OF CAPRI AT 1500 HOURS, WHEN IT HIT ITS PORT WING AGAINST THE CLIFF, JUST BELOW THE LIGHTHOUSE. IT THEN ROLLED OVER TO THE LEFT AND FELL INTO THE SEA AND EXPLODED. THE OFFICERS WHO WERE CRUISING IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WENT TO THE SPOT AND RECOVERED TWO DEAD BODIES.	
2110	:	ASCERTAINED THAT THESE WERE THE SAME TWO BODIES THE HSL BROUGHT TO NAPLES. THEY WERE HANDED OVER TO THE LAUNCH BY F/O HUNT. ONLY TWO BODIES WERE RECOVERED.	
2337	:	ASC, E. ITALY SAY THAT THOMAS ALAN GOLD WAS THE PILOT OF NO. 489. SUGGEST THAT AS HE WAS TO PICK UP PASSENGERS AT CAPO HE MAY HAVE EXCHANGED A/C.	
2348	:	HAVE BEEN TRYING TO CONTACT BASE OPS CAPO FOR 14 MINUTES. EVENTUALLY CONTACTED ATC OPS WHO WILL RAISE BASE OPS FOR US.	

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

*Walter H. Baker, Jr.*

WALTER H. BAKER, JR.,  
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS,  
BASE OPERATIONS OFFICER.

*Serial 11*

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

# CONFIDENTIAL

AIRCRAFT CLEARANCE—CAPODICHINO AIRFIELD  
(CAPODICHINO TOWER)

DATE 24 APRIL 45

A/C TYPE B-24 A/C NO. 489 ORGANIZATION 451ST

KEEPING WATCH ON 6440 A/C CALL SIGN 20 DAY "J"

DESTINATION & INTERMEDIATE STOPS LOCAL

TOWER CALL AT DESTINATION CAPO

ETD 1430 ETA 1500 ROUTE LOCAL

## CREW AND PASSENGERS

(ALL PERSONNEL MUST BE LISTED)

1. FISH 7. \_\_\_\_\_
2. GOLD 8. \_\_\_\_\_
3. BURLY 9. \_\_\_\_\_
4. SYNDER 10. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_ 11. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_ 12. \_\_\_\_\_

## WEATHER

I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE RECEIVED ROUTE AND TERMINAL WEATHER  
FORECAST NO. \_\_\_\_\_ FROM BASE WEATHER.

## BRIEFING

I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE RECEIVED ALL BRIEFING MATERIAL NECESSARY TO MY FLIGHT, SUCH AS RADIO INFORMATION, PROPER ROUTE, AREAS WHICH ARE RESTRICTED, AND THAT I HOLD ALL NECESSARY CODES, TABLES, AND COLORS OF THE DAY TO COVER THE PERIOD OF MY CONTEMPLATED FLIGHT.

KENDALL FISH 1ST LT.

(PILOT'S SIGNATURE)

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

*Walter H. Baker, Jr.*

WALTER H. BAKER, JR.,  
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS,  
BASE OPERATIONS OFFICER.

CAPT. W. H. BAKER

(CLEARANCE AUTHORITY RWT)

*Enc.*  
**CONFIDENTIAL**



NO 1 ENGINE HIT AND  
TORN OFF PLANE TURNS  
& CRASHES WATER 200'  
DEEP - BOTTOM SIDE UP

FLIGHT OF B-24 (DOTTED)

ISLE of CAPRI

AFGD No. 3 - DRAWN BY SGT B DABNEY 5-2-45