

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

ACCIDENT NO. *44-3121-511*

(1) Place Manduria Air Field, Italy (2) Date 21 March 1944 (3) Time 1220  
 AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-24H (5) A. F. No. 42-7734 (6) Station A.P.O. # 520  
 Organization: (7) 15 AF (8) 451st (9) 725th (Squadron)  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group)

**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	TUNNEY, WILLIAM W.	P	0-669814	1st Lt	01	AC	15th AF	None	No
CP	BERGMAN, RAY W.	P	0-684247	2nd Lt	18	AC	15th AF	None	No
N	BATCHAK, ELLIAS M.	N	0-685681	2nd Lt	18	AC	15th AF	None	No
B	DRISKA, THEODORE L.	B	0-690040	2nd Lt	01	AC	15th AF	None	No
N	BLACKMAN, KENT G.	N	0-694315	2nd Lt	18	AC	15th AF	None	No
AE	Dieter, Henry W.	AE	35380275	T/Sgt	20	AC	15th AF	None	No
PO	Gryzenski, Joseph E.	PO	15075307	T/Sgt	20	AC	15th AF	None	No
AE	Westerburg, Harmon E.	AE	33185249	T/Sgt	20	AC	15th AF	Minor	No
AG	Nolin, Albert E.	AG	35442285	Sgt	20	AC	15th AF	None	No

**PERSONNEL WHOSE NAMES WERE CHANGED WITH ACCIDENT**

(20) TUNNEY WILLIAM W (21) 0-669814 (22) 1st Lt (23) 01 (24) Air Corps  
 (Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)  
 Assigned (25) 15th AF (26) 451st (27) 725th (28) A.P.O. # 520  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Attached for flying (29) (Command and Air Force) (30) (Group) (31) (Squadron) (32) (Station)  
 Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 1-2-43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 1-2-43 Instrument rating (37) 11-12-43  
 (Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

**FIRST PILOT HOURS:**

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type 697.50 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 24:25  
 (39) This model 268:25 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 0:00  
 (40) Last 90 days 128:50 (44) Night time last 6 months 43:35  
 (41) Total 7:661.50 (45) Night time last 30 days 0:00

BY AUTHORITY OF JEE

DATE 7/20/45

**AIRCRAFT DAMAGE**

**DAMAGE**

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

**(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS**

Aircraft destroyed, transferred to 351st Service Squadron, Manduria, Italy.

(50) Weather at the time of accident Light rain, Ceiling: 2000' Broken overcast Est. 5000'  
 Visibility 6 miles

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No  
 (52) Cleared from Practic Tower (53) To Local (54) Kind of clearance Formation

(55) Pilot's mission Practice Ring Formation

(56) Nature of accident Aircraft landed in normal manner. After rolling about 50 yards, left tire blew out causing left main landing gear to break off.

(57) Cause of accident low out of left tire resulting in failure of left landing gear.

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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

Engineer checked landing gear for down and locked and aircraft proceeded to land in normal manner. Landing at approximately 105 MPH. The airplane rolled about 50 or 75 yards and the left tire blew out causing the left main landing gear to tear loose from the aircraft. The aircraft skidded off the left side of the runway and spun around causing the aircraft to break in several places.

Aircraft damaged beyond repair.

Assistant Engineer received minor injuries.

RESPONSIBILITY

100% Material Failure.

*Robert E. L. Hatch*  
ROBERT E. L. HATCH,  
Colonel, Air Corps

*Linn R. Blackmon*  
LINN R. BLACKMON,  
Major, Air Corps

*Marshall Y. Kremers*  
MARSHALL Y. KREMERS,  
Captain, M.C.

*William H. McManus, Jr.*  
WILLIAM H. McMANUS, JR.,  
Captain, Air Corps

*Leland A. Younkin*  
LELAND A. YOUNKIN,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
Aircraft Accident Officer.

Signature.....  
Investigating Officer

Date.....

**STATEMENT OF WILLIAM M. TUNNEY, PILOT**

I was Pilot on airplane 42-7754 on March 21, 1944. We were returning from a practice formation mission and made the normal approach for landing. 2/Sgt Dieter, Engineer, was calling off airspeed and we landed at 100 M.P.H. We rolled 50 or 75 yards and the left tire blew out and the left main landing gear tore completely loose from the aircraft. The left wing went down and we skidded completely off the left side of the runway.

*William M. Tunney*

WILLIAM M. TUNNEY,  
1st Lt., Air Corps.

STATEMENT OF HENRY W. DIXTER, ENGINEER

I was Engineer on Airplane 42-7734 on the 21 of March 1944. The landing gear had been checked for down and locked and we made the normal approach for landing. I was calling off airspeed and we hit the ground at about 105 M.P.H. Shortly after hitting the ground the left tire blew out and the left main landing gear tore loose. The airplane then skidded off the left side of the runway and stopped.

*Henry W. Dixter*  
HENRY W. DIXTER,  
T/Sgt., Air Corps.