

**RESTRICTED**

WAR DEPARTMENT

U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

**REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT**

8575-**RESTRICTED**

3-6-45

58

4

(1) Place Castelluccio Air Field, Italy (2) Date 12 February 1945 (3) Time 1500  
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-24L DO (5) A. E. No. 44-49324 (6) Station Castelluccio AAF, Italy  
Organization: (7) 15th AF (8) 451st B.G.F.H. (9) 725th Bomb Sq.  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

**PERSONNEL**

DEUTY (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)
Instructor	<u>AP Nelson, Clark N.</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>0-798564</u>	<u>1st Lt.</u>	<u>01</u>	<u>AC</u>	<u>15th AF</u>	<u>Minor</u>	<u>No</u>
Student	<u>SP Crawford, Thomas H.</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>0-782485</u>	<u>2nd Lt.</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>AC</u>	<u>15th AF</u>	<u>Minor</u>	<u>No</u>
	<u>E Cochran, Donald S.</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>11083615</u>	<u>Cpl.</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>AAF</u>	<u>15th AF</u>	<u>Minor</u>	<u>No</u>

**INTRODUCTION**

(20) Nelson Clark N. (Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (21) 0-798564 (Serial number) (22) 1st Lt. (Rank) (23) 01 (Personnel class) (24) AC (Branch)  
Assigned (25) 15th AF (Command and Air Force) (26) 451st B.G.F.H. (Group) (27) 725th Bomb Sq. (Squadron) (28) Castelluccio AAF, Italy (Station)  
Attached for flying (29) 15th AF (Command and Air Force) (30) Trainer (Group) (31) 15th AF (Command and Air Force) (32) 15th AF (Station)  
Original rating (33) Pilot (Rating) (34) 2-16-43 (Date) Present rating (35) Pilot (Rating) (36) 2-16-43 (Date) Instrument rating (37) 6-16-44 (Date)

First Pilot Hours: (at the time of this accident) OK  
(38) This type B-24 415:00 (42) Instrument time last 6 months  
(39) This model B-24L 36:00 (43) Instrument time last 30 days  
(40) Last 90 days 86:00 (44) Night time last 6 months  
(41) Total 1887:55 (45) Night time last 30 days

**AIRCRAFT DAMAGE**

DAMAGE	(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>4</u>	
(47) Engine(s) <u>4</u>	<u>Complete destruction.</u>
(48) Propeller(s) <u>4</u>	

(50) Weather at the time of accident Clouding and visibility unlimited. Wind-- west, steady, 10 mph.  
(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No  
(52) Cleared from Castelluccio (53) To Castelluccio (54) Kind of clearance Local  
(55) Pilot's mission Transition

(56) Nature of accident landing accident IM 05-09-22  
(57) Cause of accident Aircraft washed onto the ground as power was applied and flaps retracted for a practice three engine go-around.  
(58) No

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## DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

## NARRATIVE STATEMENT

The instructor pilot was checking out the pilot in three engine go-arounds. The witnesses to the accident report two dangerously low go-arounds preceded the accident.

The last approach seemed appropriate enough, but in the opinion of the investigating board, the decision to go around was made too late and in the anxiety over their situation the flaps were allowed to fully retract. They were unable to stop their descent and mushed onto the ground. For a brief period of time full power was left on to get back in the air but the soft ground prevented picking up the necessary speed. The throttles were closed and the aircraft hit several ditches; shearing the landing gear and breaking the fuselage in several sections.

Investigation revealed the flaps to be fully retracted. The piston in the flap hydraulic actuating cylinder was in the "flaps up" end of the cylinder. The cables were tight in "flaps up" position. The instrument board indicator needle showed flaps fully retracted. The dents left in the trailing edge of each wing by the sheared landing gear were conformal for both flaps and wing surfaces; a condition only possible by having fully retracted flaps as the gear collapsed.

## RESPONSIBILITY

The board places the cause of the accident as poor judgement of operating personnel. Instructor pilot error 100%.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The accident has been called to the attention of all pilots of this group with the recommendation that three engine go-arounds be practiced at higher altitudes and that pilots be particularly concerned about the amount of flaps in use as it materially affects the ship's stalling speed.



*L. Roy Stefanowicz*  
LEROY L. STEFANOWICZ  
Colonel, Air Corps  
Commanding.

*John S. Hopf*  
JOHN S. HOPF  
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps.

*Clyde L. Wagner*  
CLYDE L. WAGNER  
Major, Medical Corps.

*Francis J. Hoffmann*  
FRANCIS J. HOFFMANN  
Major, Air Corps

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ (Investigating Officer)

*Richard E. Prooty*  
RICHARD E. PROOTY  
Captain, Air Corps.  
Actg. Accident Officer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



725TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
451ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
APO #520 US ARMY

S T A T E M E N T

I was checking LT. CRAWFORD for emergency procedure at the time of the accident. The particular thing at the time of the accident was three (3) engine go arounds. I pulled back #1 engine on the final approach and LT. CRAWFORD was making a good approach. At about one hundred and fifty feet (150 ft) above the ground and near the end of the runway, I called "go around". He gave full power to the three engines and called for 30° flaps (milked up) which I gave him. I called 30° and he called back 20° which I milked up. At that time everything was well under control but shortly it seemed that the plane lost airspeed and altitude rapidly. I pushed #1 throttle into his hand and he pushed it to full power and nosed down a little to try to pick up airspeed. When it was evident that we would hit, he pulled back and we landed tail low. We took off for about fifty (50) feet and then came down again. Throttles were cut and we rolled all right till we hit two ditches which took all our gear off. All three occupants went out through a hole over the copilots' seat. The escape hatch had been opened but it was jammed shut during the crash.

Investigation showed that flaps were up at the time we hit the ground. I, myself, was positive that I had stopped the flaps at 20°. The engineer claimed he watched the flaps indicator stop at 20°.

*Clark N. Nelson*

CLARK N. NELSON  
1st Lt., AC  
Instructor Pilot

725TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
451ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
APO #520 US ARMY

S T A T E M E N T

At the time of the accident, LT. NELSON was checking me out on emergency procedures. At this particular time, we were making three (3) engine go arounds. LT. NELSON pulled back #1 engine and I proceeded to make the final approach. We were approximately one hundred and fifty (150) feet from the ground, when he said "pull up and go around". I gave full power on #2-#3-#4 engines and called for the flaps to be milked up to 30°. When he called back "30°", I then called for them to be milked up to 20°, which he did. Immediately after this, the ship started mushing down and loosing airspeed. LT. NELSON pushed #1 throttle in my hand and I pushed it fully forward, making four engines. I pushed the nose down slightly to gain airspeed and upon seeing that the plane would not pick up airspeed and also continued to mush downward, I made a tail low landing and tried to take off. Upon seeing that the ship would not leave the ground, I cut all four (4) throttles and rolled until the ship hit the ditches and sheared off the landing gear.

Investigation shows that the flaps were fully retracted. My engineer, CPL. COCHRANE, states that he saw LT. NELSON stop the flaps at 20° on the flap indicator.

*Thomas H. Crawford*

THOMAS H. CRAWFORD  
2nd. Lt., AC  
Pilot

