

Accident No. 43-2-11-61

Date

Checked by _____

Analyzed by BAK

3/27/43

Copied for Wright
Field by _____

Notes _____

(Nature Group

Collision in full flight
with a ridge

(Specific Nature

(Underlying Nature

other pilot missed
cone of silence -

(Cause Group

100% Judgment

(Specific Cause

Momentary lapse of
mental efficiency

(Underlying Cause

Violation of rules
concerning instrument
flying at the field

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

43-2-11-61
Accident No. 064

(1) Place Walla Walla Army Air Field, Wash. (2) Date February 11, 1943 (3) Time 1115
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17P (5) A. F. No. 42-5367 (6) Station Walla Walla AAF, Wash.
Organization: (7) 2nd Air Force (8) 88th Bomb Gp. (9) 317th Bomb Sq.
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

DOVT (10)	NAME (Last name first) (11)	RATING (12)	SERIAL NO. (13)	RANK (14)	PERSONNEL CLASS (15)	BRANCH (16)	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND (17)	RESULT OF PERSONNEL (18)	USE OF PARACHUTE (19)
01P	RAY, JOHN T.	P	0-729901	2nd Lt.	20101	AC	2nd AF	Fatal	No
04CP	REED, RICHARD H.	P	0-733979	2nd Lt.	20101	AC	2nd AF	Fatal	No
65N	DUNNING, DAVID T.	N	0-791577	2nd Lt.	20161	AC	2nd AF	Fatal	No
61B	LEHNE, HANS N.	B	0-735321	2nd Lt.	20161	AC	2nd AF	Fatal	No
62E	DEE, ALEXANDER	E	32192654	T/Sgt.	18130	AC	2nd AF	Fatal	No
62AE	BALL, LLOYD L.	AE	39528996	S/Sgt.	18120	AC	2nd AF	Fatal	No
71P	JOHNSON, MILTON D.	P	38120734	S/Sgt.	18130	AC	2nd AF	Fatal	No
71AR	SEIFERT, CLAUDE W. JR.	AR	39843901	S/Sgt.	18120	AC	2nd AF	Fatal	No
67G	PANKHANEL, WILLIAM C.	G	37283720	S/Sgt.	18130	AC	2nd AF	Fatal	No
67AG	PERKINS, JOSEPH F.	AG	18124803	S/Sgt.	18120	AC	2nd AF	Fatal	No

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) RAY, JOHN T. (21) 0-729901 (22) 2nd Lt. (23) 201 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle name) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned (25) 2nd Air Force (26) 88th Bomb Gp. (27) 317th Bomb Sq. (28) Walla Walla AAF.
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) 2nd Air Force (30) 88th Bomb Gp. (31) 317th Bomb Sq. (32) Walla Walla AAF.
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) 2nd Lt. (34) 2-29-42 Present rating (35) 2nd Lt. (36) 2-29-42 Instrument rating (37) 11-23-42
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Instrument rating) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type 225:15 (39) Instrument time last 6 months 14:50
(40) This model 211:25 (41) Instrument time last 30 days 4:50
(42) Last 90 days 182:25 (43) Night time last 6 months
(44) Total 544:30 (45) Night time last 30 days

Last Instrument check given 2-4-43 by Captain, DONALD E. BILGER.
AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE

(46) Aircraft W 5
(47) Engine(s) 5 5 5 5
(48) Propeller(s) 5 5 5 5

Total loss.

(49) Weather at the time of accident Attached. 01

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident Yes.

(52) Cleared from Parago (53) To Walla Walla

(54) Pilot's mission Bombing, Gunnery and Instrument Flight.

(55) Nature of accident Airplane ran into mountain ridge while in flight.

(56) Cause of accident 1100' approached station too low and missed the cone of silence.

It is the opinion of the WNAF Aircraft Accident Committee that met on February 26, 1943, that the accident of B-17F 42-5367 was due to a combination of Pilot error and undesirable Radio Range Facilities. The pilot, 2nd Lt. John T. Ray, took off at 0615 for local bombing and instrument practice. At 1050, near the end of his mission, he radioed in, requested and received, clearance from Walla Walla CAA Radio Range Station to approach Walla Walla at 5500 feet on the west leg. At that time he stated that his position was over Pasco Navy Base, Wash. From that point Lt. Ray evidently proceeded to the Range Station, missed the cone of silence, and six minutes later a distance of seventeen miles air line east of Walla Walla, struck a ridge at approximately 6000 feet MSL near Table Top Mountain at 1115. The time of the accident being substantiated by various watches of the crew that were stopped at the time of impact.

Responsibility of the accident is fixed as follows: Lt. Ray was rated by his group as an "above average" instrument pilot. He was, in fact, an instrument instructor. A few days before the accident he had received his monthly instrument check and was rated "excellent". Also, he had thirty hours flying time at this field and was therefore familiar with the terrain. However, he made the initial error by clearing to the field below the 12,000 feet minimum for instrument approaches that exists at this station and of which he had knowledge. It is the opinion of the committee that the second and fatal error, that of missing the cone, was due to two points: First, the Walla Walla Radio Range is not a simultaneous Range. There was quite heavy traffic for the station that morning and the beam was off a great deal of the time while the operator gave clearance and weather to other ships. Also, it is the opinion of the committee that the operator took undue time in his voice broadcast. At one period during the day in question, a member of this committee timed the operator on duty and it took him seven minutes to give the weather report to another aircraft. Second, the pilot had a thirty mile an hour tail wind, of which the committee believes him unaware, that would make his elapsed to the cone much quicker than he had anticipated.

It is the recommendation of this committee that the Walla Walla Radio Range be made a simultaneous broadcast station as soon as practicable. Until such time as this is accomplished, it is advised that the Walla Walla control tower be allowed to issue all clearances for their own ships, and that the Radio Station hold their necessary conversation to a minimum. It is further recommended that the Range Station cooperate with the Army Air Field instructions not to clear army ships on actual instruments to the station below the army minimum.

All recommendations with the exception of the installation of a simultaneous broadcast range have already been acted upon by the CAA in cooperation with this field.

John C. Covington
JOHN C. COVINGTON, Lt. Col., Air Corps,
Wing Representative

Harry E. Gilmore
HARRY E. GILMORE, Major, Air Corps,
Range Commander

Robert T. Williams
ROBERT T. WILLIAMS, Major, Air Corps,
Group Representative.

000.93

HEADQUARTERS 17th BOMB WING
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING OFFICER
CAMP RAPID
RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA

JNE-vg

March 16, 1943.

Subject: Transmittal of Aircraft Accident Report.

To: Commanding General, AAF, Washington, D.C.

Transmitted herewith is AAF Form 14, "Technical report of Aircraft Accident Classification Committee", Walla Walla Army Air Field, on the accident of B-17F No. 42-5367, February 11, 1943.

For the Commanding Officer:

John W. Simpson
JOHN W. SIMPSON,
Major, 17th Bomb Wg.,
Adjutant.

Incls. 8.

Exhibit A to H Incl.

DFS 3

MAR 21 1943

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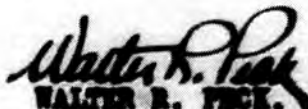
1st Ind.

WRP/ef

HEADQUARTERS 17TH BOMBARDMENT WING, Camp Rapid, Rapid City, South Dakota.
March 12, 1943.

To: Commanding General, Second Air Force, Fort George Wright, Washington.

Findings and Recommendations of the Aircraft Accident Committee are
concurred in.

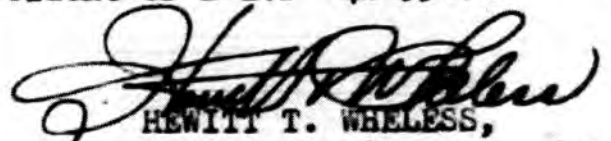

WALTER R. PECK,
Colonel, 17th Bomb Wing,
Commanding.

March 2, 1943.

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

Comments and Recommendations of the Group Commander:

1. I concur with the findings and recommendations of the Aircraft Accident Committee in the accident of B-17F 42-5367.


HEWITT T. WHELESS,
Major, Air Corps,
Commanding Officer,
88th Bomb. Gp (H).

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS

EXHIBIT A

Office of the Weather Officer
Walla Walla Army Air Field, Washington

March 4, 1943

The following is the weather as extracted from CAA teletype reports coming in on Circuit 7910:

PWT FEB 11, 1943
0930 WL C E400/44/42-7/CIG RGD
1030 WL C E700/46/43-9
1130 WL C E600/47/45-7/R- INTMT CIG RGD 31599 0276

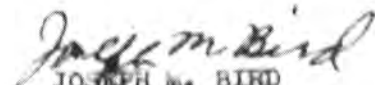
The elevation of the CAA station is about 1125 feet, therefore the MSL ceiling according to these reports about the time of the accident would have been no lower than an estimated 7100 feet over the field. This weather becomes available at 35 minutes past the hour; however, weather was not given to 42-5367 when he contacted Walla Walla Radio for his clearance back to the field.

Weather reports taken across the field from the CAA, which is 1 1/4 miles west, by weather personnel at this station was as follows:

PWT FEB 11, 1943
0930 E400/12 45/41-3
1030 E350/10 46/44-6/K OVR CITY
1130 E350/12 48/45-5/K OVR CITY/MMM 5005
1132 SPL E350/12R- 48/45-6

As can be seen from these reports the MSL ceiling was estimated 4600 feet about the time of the accident. This discrepancy between CAA and Army Weather reports is not unusual at this station as many pilots will verify. However, the pilot was not aware of what the ceiling was therefore the discrepancy has no effect except to show that the lower estimate must have been correct otherwise the ground would have been observed by the pilot on passing over the station because he was not under the hood.

The air mass was fresh Polar Pacific which followed a weak occluded front and resulted in the usual post-frontal instability in the Pacific Northwest. The light rain started at 1132 PWT and moved in from the west. The mountains to the east and southeast had showers due to additional upslope all morning and afternoon.


JOSEPH M. BIRD
Captain, Air Corps,
Weather Officer.

RESTRICTED

EXHIBIT B

**HEADQUARTERS
EIGHTY EIGHTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer**

**Walla Walla, Wash.
February 13, 1943.**

STATEMENT

Following is a breakdown of B-17F time for Lt. John T. Ray:

1. Total pilot time, B-17F 222:35 hours.
Total pilot Instrument time 21:50 hours.
Total pilot night time 78:20 hours.
2. Last Instrument check was made on February 4, 1943, at AAB, Walla Walla, Washington, in a B-17F, the pilot was checked by Captain Donald E. Bilger.

Allison C. Brooks
ALLISON C. BROOKS,
Major, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.

RESTRICTED

EXHIBIT C

February 26, 1943.

STATEMENT

Pertaining to Airplane B-17F 42-5367, this Airplane was serviced with 2100 gallons. This was personally checked by me S/Sgt. L. W. Shinkle, when I came on shift of that day. The plane was serviced by Sgt. Bradley, C. and had not been flown for the previous about 12 to 15 hrs.

S/Sgt. Leo W. Shinkle
S/Sgt. LEO W. SHINKLE.

RESTRICTED

EXHIBIT D

OFFICE OF THE SQUADRON SURGEON
318th Bombardment Squadron
88th Bombardment Group (H)

February 12, 1943

STATEMENT

1. I examined 2nd Lt. John T. Ray and the other personnel of his ten man crew on February 11, 1943 at 0520 and found them all physically fit for flying. A record of this is on file in the Flight Surgeons Office of the 88th Bombardment Group.

2. I am personally acquainted with Lt. John T. Ray and no evidence of flying fatigue existed.

William Hildebrand

WILLIAM HILDEBRAND
1st Lt. MC
Squadron Surgeon

RESTRICTED

EXHIBIT E

AIR BASE HEADQUARTERS
Office of the Base S-2
Walla Walla Army Air Field, Wash.

March 3, 1943

Investigation by this office failed to disclose any evidence of sabotage in connection with crash of B-17F No. 42-5367 February 11, 1943., seventeen miles air line, east of Walla Walla Air Field, Washington.

Thomas K. Perry
THOMAS K. PERRY
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Base S-2.

RESTRICTED

EXHIBIT

February 24, 1943,

STATEMENT

Spare parts, suitable lighting equipment, transportation and adequate shelter for protection from excessive heat or cold are available.

Lew M. Evans
LEW M. EVANS,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Engineering Officer,
88th Bomb. Group (H).

RESTRICTED

EXHIBIT G

**HEADQUARTERS
EIGHTY EIGHTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer**

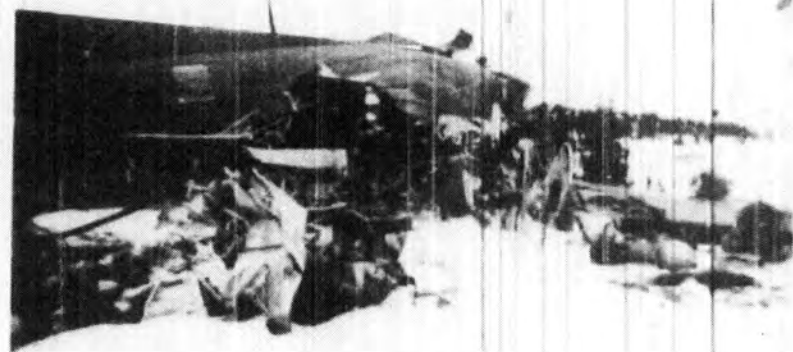
Walla Walla, Wash.
February 13, 1943.

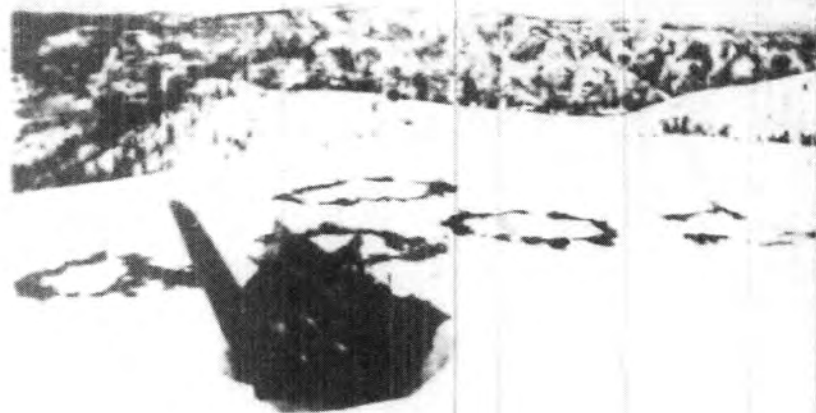
REST FACILITIES AVAILABLE

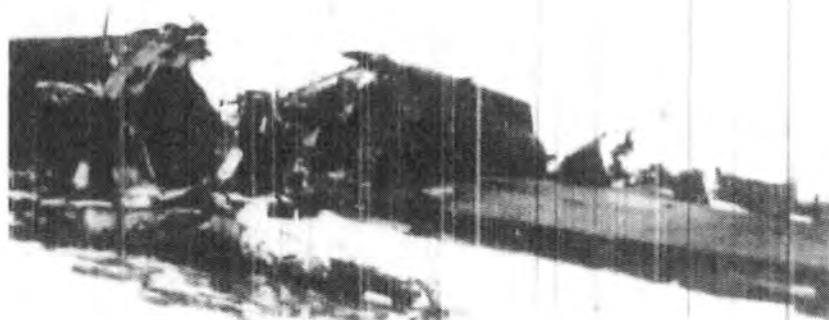
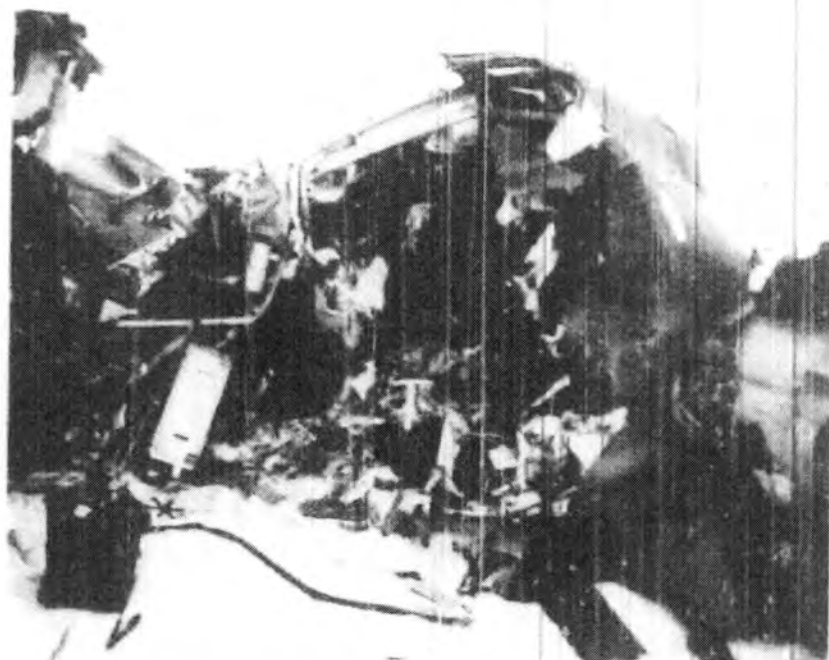
1. The Mess Halls are open 24 hours a day. The Officer's Club Lounge is open at all times. There is also a Base Theater, and a Recreation Hall on the Post.
2. There are several Theaters in town, also a Bowling Alley, and several Restaurants. The Y.M.C.A. is available in town upon request.
3. There is a Rest Camp available at all times 25 miles South West of the Post.

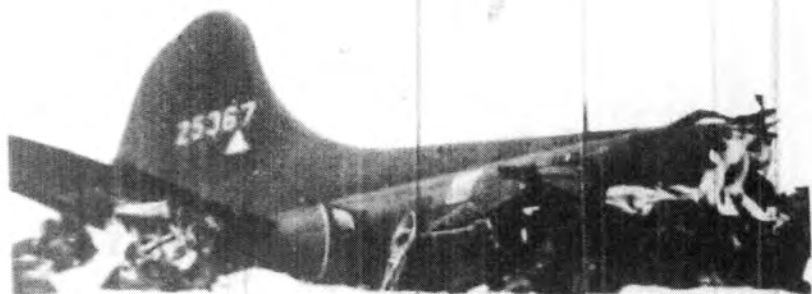
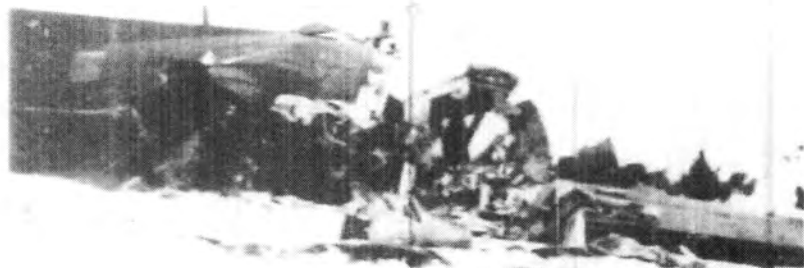
Allison C. Brooks

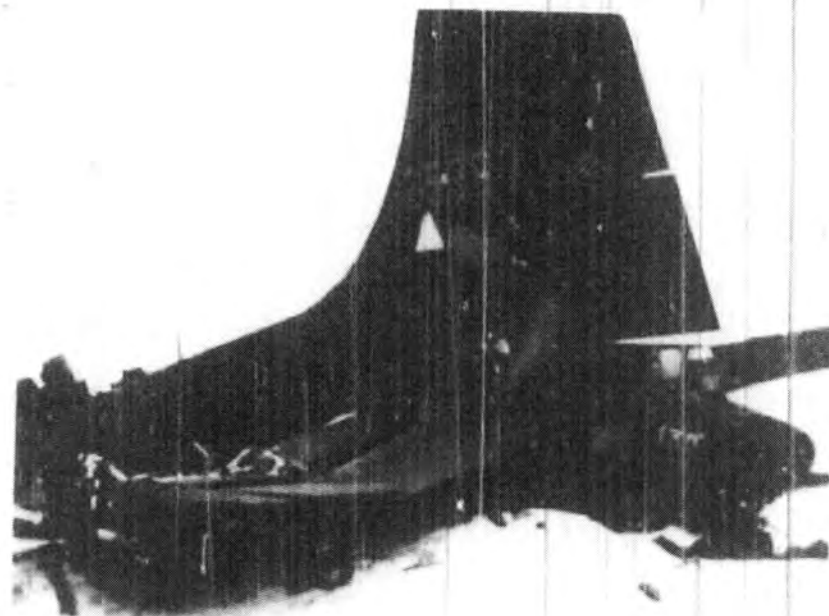
ALLISON C. BROOKS,
Major, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.











MRS 41 ARL 234 MAR 24/43

MISS BERYL MURRAY

NO RECORD THIS OFFICE ON 2ND LT. JOHN T. RAY PER U TWX 3/23. ALSO
NO RECORD OF REPORT ON SAME BEING RECEIVED IN AAF MESSAGE CENTER
ON FEB 11, 12, 13 OR 14.

CHARLES BELANGER

MH1506EWT

ACK PLS END

MSGS RECD MF END

MRS 41 ARL 234 MAR 24/43

MISS BERYL MURRAY

NO RECORD THIS OFFICE ON 2ND LT. JOHN T. RAY PER U TWX 3/23. ALSO
NO RECORD OF REPORT ON SAME BEING RECEIVED IN AAF MESSAGE CENTER
ON FEB 11, 12, 13 OR 14.

CHARLES BELANGER

MH1506WT

ACK PLS END

MSGS RECD MF END

MSG 11 W SAL 363 MARCH 23/43

MRS GRACE CROSS

WE ARE IN RECEIPT OF FORM 14 DATE FEB. 11/43 PILOT 2ND LT JOHN T.
RAY FROM WALLAWALLA ARMY AIR FLD, WASH. THIS IS A FATAL AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT
FROM OUR RECORDS NO PRELIMINARY REPORT WAS RECEIVED. WILL YOU PLEASE
CHECK TO SEE IF A PRELIMINARY REPORT WAS RECEIVED IN YOUR OFFICE OR
MSG CENTER. PLEASE ADVISE.

SIGNED BERLY MURRAY

MF1700 EWT

ACK PLS

NEND

MSG 4383 OK BL END

TELETYPE MESSAGE
MARCH 23, 1943

MRS. GRACE CROSS
LIAISON OFFICE
WASH, D. C.

BN/cc

WE ARE IN RECEIPT OF FORM 14 DATE FEB. 11, 1943, PILOT 2ND LT JOHN T. RAY
FROM WALLAWALLA ARMY AIR FLD, WASH. THIS IS A FATAL AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT. FROM
OUR RECORDS NO PRELIMINARY REPORT WAS RECEIVED. WILL YOU PLEASE CHECK TO SEE
IF A PRELIMINARY REPORT WAS RECEIVED IN YOUR OFFICE OR MSG CENTER. PLEASE
ADVISE

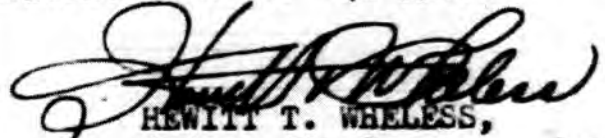
George P. Kane,
Major, Air Corps.
Director of Flying Safety

March 2, 1943.

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

Comments and Recommendations of the Group Commander:

1. I concur with the findings and recommendations of the Aircraft Accident Committee in the accident of B-17F 42-5367.



HEWITT T. WHELESS,
Major, Air Corps,
Commanding Officer,
88th Bomb. Gp (H).