

Accident #

457 17 540

Date

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Notes

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1225:9-43

U. S. ARMY FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1). Place 5 miles S/E of Leiston

(2) Date 17 July 1944

0925

AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model E-17C

(S) A. F. No. 42-102977

(●) Nelson 139

Organization: (7) 8th AF

(4) 100th

349th

(Commercial and Air Force)

1000

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PERSONNEL

DATE	NAME (Last name first)	RANK	SERIAL NO.	LINE	PERSONNEL CLASS	BRANCH	ARE FORCE ON COMMAND	REMARKS PERSONNEL	TYPE OF PARACHUTE
(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
6/1 P	TRAFNELL, JOSEPH (NMI) IV	P	D-818781	2nd Lt.	18	AC	StbAF	none	yes
6/4 CP	KODAS, MELVIN L.	P	D-5C3283	2nd Lt.	18	AC	StbAF	none	yes
6/2 N	HEYNEMANN, HAROLD L.	N	O-681539	1st Lt.	18	AC	StbAF	none	yes
6/1 TOG	GREEN, BYRON R.	AG	31289048	S/Sgt.	38	AC	StbAF	Sprain	yes
7/1 R	COOPER, JOHN P.	R	32431713	T/Sgt.	38	AC	StbAF	Sprain	yes
1 R	HOLDITCH, MURRY W.	E	1P178502	T/Sgt.	38	AC	StbAF	none	yes
1 BT	GEIGLE, WILLIAM A.	AG	33188079	S/Sgt.	38	AC	StbAF	none	yes
1 RW	PATRICK, ROBERT (NMI)	G	18065993	S/Sgt.	38	AC	StbAF	none	yes
1 IN	STOPPEL, ADAM C.	G	17088192	S/Sgt.	38	AC	StbAF	none	yes
1 TO	HARTEN, CLARK R.	G	16084549	S/Sgt.	38	AC	StbAF	none	yes

(70) TRAFNELL, JOSEPH (NMI) (71) 0-818781 (72) 2nd Lt. (73) 1A (74) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Promoted about) (Rank)

Assigned (25) 8th AF (25) 100th (25) 349th (25) AAF 139

Attached for flying (20) **5th AF** (26) **100th** (31) **349th** (32) **AAF 139**
(Continental and Air Force) (General) (Engineer) (Engineer)

Original rating (30) Pilot (Rating) (34) 5 Dec '43 (Date) Instrument rating (35) Pilot (Rating) (36) 5 Dec '43 (Date) Instrument rating (37) 7 June '44 (Date)

First Pilot Hours:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type B-17 29:30 (39) Instrument time last 6 months 3:00 (P)

(38) This model	B-170	26-50	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	3.00	(P)
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(48) Inst 90 days	3-17	59-30	(49) Night class inst 2 months	62	56-15	1-00	(F)
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(41) Total	All types	29:30	(42) Night time last 30 days	1:00 (P)
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AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE					SERIAL LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS	
(40) Aircraft	W	S	W	W	W	Salvage
(47) Engine(s)	W	S	W	S	W	Salvage
(48) Propeller(s)	W	S	W	S	W	Salvage

(80) Weather at the time of accident: Visibility 700 yards with fog. Ceiling zero

(34) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident?

(2*) Cleared from 139 (33) To 139 (34) Kind of clearance Organic

(44) Pilot's mission ... **Combat**

(AN) Nature of accident: **Fire; crew bailed out**

(57) Cause of accident: Oil leak in #1 propeller, engine froze, high/empty fire.

(58) No AAF Form #34 is being submitted.

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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

1. It is the opinion of the Accident Board that 2nd Lt. JOSEPH TRAPNELL used good judgment in having his crew bail out, which each member did successfully. He also used good judgment in attempting to head the aircraft out to sea on the AFCE, although he was not successful at this.

2. The pilot was in no way responsible for the accident.

John B. Kidd
JOHN B. KIDD,
Lt. Col., Air Corps,
President.

Summer H. Reeder
SUMMER H. REEDER,
Major, Air Corps,
Member.

Maurice F. Youngs
MAURICE F. YOUNGS,
Captain, Air Corps,
Member.

Exhibits Included:

- "A" - Pilot's Statement
- "B" - Flying Control Officer's Statement
- "C" - Photographs
- "D" - Convening Authority

Signature _____
(Investigating Officer)

Date _____

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HEADQUARTERS
ONE HUNDREDTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H), AAF
Office of the Operations Officer
APO #559

21 July 1944

SUBJECT: Pilot's Statement of Aircraft Accident of 17 July 1944.

TO : President, Aircraft Accident Board, AAF Station #139.

1. I was the pilot of aircraft #42-102977 which was flying on a operational mission on the 17th of July 1944. We had taken off from home base and had reached an altitude of 17,000', flying in formation with the Group, when #1 engine developed an oil leak. The oil sprayed out so fast that I was unable to feather the propeller before it started windmilling violently. We left the formation and let-down through the heavy overcast over Buncher #28. At 5,000' the engine froze and the propeller stopped turning. I let down to 1,000' with the hope of going below the overcast, but could not do so. I asked my navigator for a heading in order that I could jettison the bomb load. He gave me a heading of 90 degrees for 7 1/2 minutes from Buncher #28, at which point (over water) I jettisoned our bomb load of 2 X 2,000' bombs. On the return, and while several miles off the English Coast, the propeller started windmilling again (I was never able to feather it), and vibrating terrifically. The engine began to throw parts and appeared as though it would catch fire. I ordered the crew to stand-by with their parachutes on. I broke the emergency seal on the super-charger and proceeded to get as much altitude as possible before reaching the English Coast. When my radio compass needle went off to the side, I knew that I was over land. I then gave the order to bail out, for the engine had begun to burn. After the crew had bailed out, I reset the AFCE so that the aircraft would make a slow turn to the left and lose altitude. This would put the aircraft out over the water when it hit, for the altitude at this time was 2,500'. However, the plane struck land and did not hit the water. After resetting the AFCE as stated above, I bailed out.

2. The fire was behind the firewall and behind the leading edge of the left wing. I might have been able to land the aircraft had I been able to get below the heavy overcast. But with a violently windmilling engine and a bad fire, I figured that it would be impossible to make an instrument approach to the field.

Joseph Trapnell
JOSEPH TRAPNELL
2nd Lt., Air Corps,
Pilot.

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FLYING CONTROL SECTION: STATION 139
APO #559

19 July 1944

SUBJECT: Aircraft accident involving our B-17G # 42-102977-L
of the 349th Heavy Bombardment Squadron

TO : Chairman, Aircraft Accident Committee, AAF Sta. 139,
APO 559.

1. Subject: A/C accident involving one B-17G No.
42-102977-L of the 349th Heavy Bombardment Sq.
2. Time of Accident: Approximately 0930 hours 17 July
1944.
3. Place Aircraft Crashed: Near east coast between
Leiston and Framlingham at grid reference
M-856781.
4. Pilot Involved: 2nd Lt. JOSEPH (NMI) TRAPNELL
O-818718 of the 349th Bombardment Squadron.
5. Last Messages from Aircraft:
 - (1.) At 0903 hours D/F Station reported follow-
ing message from 977, "Runaway prop.-Can't
feather-Bombs jettisoned-Request further
instructions." Replied to this message,
"Return to base."
 - (2.) At 0913 hours 977 asked D/F Station for
weather report.
 - (3.) At 0925 hours D/F Station reported had
been trying to contact 977 since 0915
hours to transmit weather report but had
been unable to reach him.
6. Details Flying Control was given of accident and
source of information:
 - (1.) At 1000 hours Leiston F/C called saying
our A/C #977-L had crashed near their field.
Two members of the crew were at Leiston then.
They believed that seven men had bailed out
safely.

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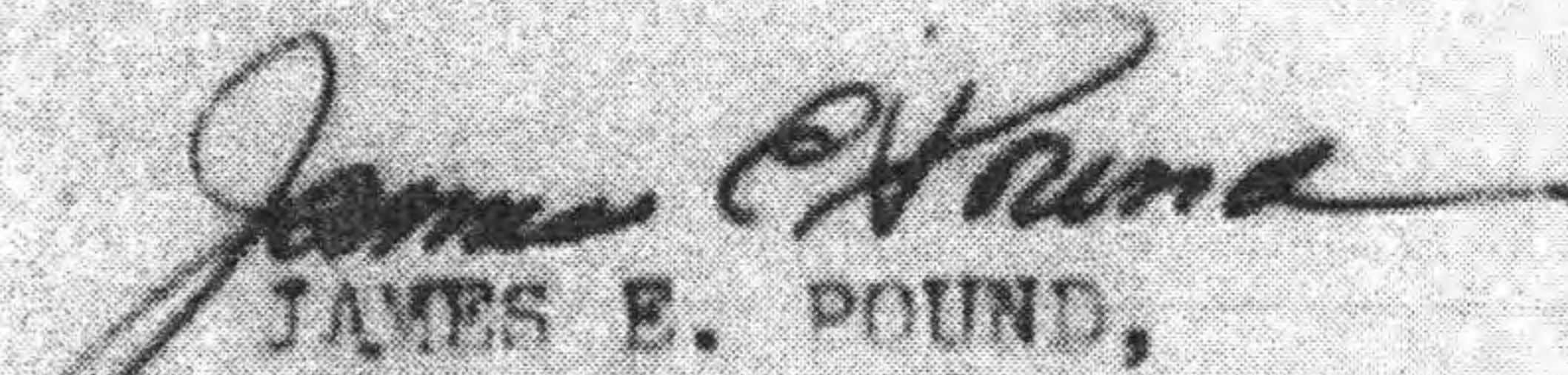
- (2.) At 1000 hours Framlingham F/C called via 3rd Bombardment Division F/C saying that Lt. TRAPNELL was there and gave the following details of the accident:
"Oil leak in # 1 engine caused runaway prop. Could not feather prop.; so went out over North Sea to jettison bombs. On way back to base #1 prop. froze causing fire to start in #1 engine. Fire soon began to spread to wing and wing tank; so pilot then ordered crew to bail out. Lt. TRAPNELL was last man to leave the A/C; so he knew all men had left the aircraft safely.

7. Injuries;

Minor: Sgt. Green, the chin turret operator a Broken ankle. Rest of crew had only slight bruises and scratches.

8. Civilian property damage.

Slight, small portion of beet crop ruined.


JAMES E. POUND,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Duty Flying Control
Officer.

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HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCE STATION NO. 139
110 550

28 April 1944

Special Orders }
Number.....111 }

1. Extracted. (EM 28th Comp Sq DE Sheffield.)
2. Col John F Callahan, 11398317, 456th Sub-Depot (C1 1), is rel'd fr Sp Dy with Sta Armament & reass'd Sp Dy with Sta S-3.
3. 1st Sgt Jack E Marshall, 14162077, 350th Bomb Sq, is rel'd to the pr of Private, for cause, off this date. (Auth: AR 615-5.)
4. 1st John C Riddle, 15070055, 350th Bomb Sq, is promoted to the pr of Staff Sergeant (Temp), off this date. (Auth: AR 615-5.)
5. CAPT GEORGE D ALLEN, 0304210, 18th Sta Compl Sq, is apptd Group of Officers' Mess Officer, in addition to his other duties, vice 1st LT LO L. (W1) MOSEY, 0572741, rel'd.
6. 1st LT JOHN R OLSON, 0561713, 418th Bomb Sq, is apptd Consolidated Mess Officer, in addition to his other duties, vice 1st LT FRANKLIN S SEIBERT, 0002016, rel'd.
7. 1st LT FRANKLIN S SEIBERT, 0002016, 350th Bomb Sq, is apptd Station Mess Officer.
8. Par 2, SO 72, this Hq cs, apptg Aircraft Accident Committee, is rescinded.
9. In accordance with Par 1, Part 6, AAF Regulation No. 62-14, as modified by Section 3, VIII AF Memo 60-2, the following named officers are appointed a permanent Aircraft Accident Committee for this station. The first-named officer is designated as Aircraft Accident Officer:

LT COL JOHN B HIGH	0406624	Hq Det 100th Gp
CAPT SUMNER H REEDER	0725003	349th Bomb Sq
CAPT MAURICE F YOUNG	0442321	Hq Det 100th Gp
CAPT ALBERT H MINKELSEN	0709480	349th Bomb Sq
10. 1st Sgt Paul A Vrabec, Jr., 15019354, 350th Bomb Sq, WP on TD c/a 1 May 44, for app seven (7) days, exclusive of travel, fr AAF Sta 139 to Bournemouth for the purpose of COCC. CTRE.

While at TD Sta 25 will be furnished with not to exceed \$2.00 per day for subs, as outlined in Cir 85 STOWA 43.

TONT TON TD 91-5 P 422-02 & 0425-24. (Auth: Ltr Hq 8th AF, Subj: For Men Alms at Rest Homes, d. 22 Nov 43 and Ltr Hq STOWA 3 Nov 43.)

By order of Lt Col B22.077:

FICIAL:

Horace L. Varian, Jr.
HORACE L. VARIAN, JR.,
Captain, Air Corps,
Station Adjutant.

HORACE L. VARIAN, JR.,
Captain, Air Corps,
Station Adjutant.

EXHIBIT "D"

