

RESTRICTED
DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

B-17 C 42-37850 was on a local GPR flight circling the field at approximately 800 feet altitude with gear down. At a point in the traffic pattern 2 miles south of the field, and while turning downwind, the B-17 collided with a C-47 which had just taken off on local flight. The B-17 was slightly higher and behind the C-47 as it approached the C-47 from the port quarter astern. The B-17 was seen to make a sudden maneuver to avoid collision but too late to avoid the C-47. The C-47 was hit by the number 4 engine of the B-17 just forward of the tail fairing on the top of the fuselage resulting in complete loss of the tail empennage of the C-47. The C-47 then went into an uncontrolled spin and crashed about 2 1/2 miles S of the field resulting in death to the two occupants. The tail unit came down in the same vicinity in a comparatively intact condition with vertical and horizontal control surfaces still in place. The left wing of the C-47 was severely crumpled by the impact.

The B-17 was seen to make a violent maneuver to avoid collision but too late to avoid hitting the C-47. The B-17 then evidently stalled out due to loss of flying speed resulting either from the maneuver to avoid collision or as a result of the impact, or a combination of both. The B-17 was seen to lower the left wing and then plunge straight down without spinning. It crashed into the ground at an estimated angle of 80 degrees from horizontal. The collision occurred at an estimated height of 800 feet above the ground.

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The pilot of the B-17 evidently failed to observe the take-off of the C-47 or failed to keep it in sight while circling the field. The weather was good at the time except for moderate turbulence at low levels but with good visibility. Both planes were in the clear at all times. It seems probable that the C-47 was beneath the B-17 in such a position that it was in a blind spot. Local field regulations require that a left hand circuit of the field be made. An accident of this nature will serve to remind pilots of the constant necessity of observing traffic taking off as well as traffic already in the air. Pilots are being warned again to employ extra crew members as look-outs especially when in the vicinity of the airport.

Signature *W. F. Lawrence*

W. F. Lawrence
WILLIAM F. LAWRENCE, CAPT, AC

William Niskanen
WILLIAM NISKANEN, CAPT, AC

Date 9 April 1945

RESTRICTED

FORM 306 (REV. 7-16-43)

WAR DEPARTMENT
Form No. 1
1-16

HEADQUARTERS
1402nd AAF Base Unit
EUROPEAN DIVISION, ATC
WAR DEPARTMENT
ARMY AIR FORCES

34
Cablegram
Account No.

CONFIDENTIAL

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

45-3-31-570
4

(1) Place 1402nd AAF Base Unit (2) Date 31 March 1945 (3) Time 1500GRT
Aircraft: (4) Type and model B-24D (5) A. F. No. (6) Station 1402nd AAF Base Unit
Organization: (7) ATC (8) Component 1402nd AAF Base Unit

DEPT	NAME (Last name first)	RATE	SERIAL NO.	RANK	FUNCTION CLASS	BRANCH	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND	STATUS IN FUNCTION	USE OF PARACHUTE
(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Hottenstein, Walter P.	P		Capt.	OT	AC	ATC	Fatal	No
	Gotterman, Joseph	P		2nd Lt.	TS	AC	ATC	Fatal	No
	Shelton, James G.	AE		Pvt.	SS	AC	ATC	Fatal	No
	Windham, Ross J.	AE		Pfc.	SS	AC	ATC	Fatal	No

(20) Hottenstein, Walter P. (21) Middle initial (22) Social number (23) Captain (24) OT (25) AAF (26) Assigned (27) ATC (28) 1402nd AAF BU (29) Attached for flying (30) ATC (31) 1402nd AAF BU (32) Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 9/9/42 (35) Present rating (36) Pilot (37) 9/9/42 (38) Instrument rating (39) Feb 45

Flt Pilot Hours: (at the time of this accident)

(40) This type	11:00	(43) Instrument time last 6 months	6:35
(41) This model	11:00	(44) Instrument time last 30 days	:15
(42) Last 90 days	11:00	(45) Night time last 6 months	1:25
(46) Total	1298:25	(47) Night time last 30 days	None

props - AIRCRAFT DAMAGE Fire

DAMAGE	(48) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(49) Aircraft	Total Wreck
(50) Engine(s)	Total Wreck
(51) Propeller(s)	Total Wreck

(52) Weather at the time of accident: Bovingdon 1400 GMT Broken clouds at 1700 feet, visibility 10, wind southwest 30, gusts to 40. Bovingdon 1500GRT, high overcast, lower broken 1500 9/10 cover, visibility 8 miles, wind SSW 29, gusts to 40
 (53) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident? No
 (54) Cleared from 1402nd AAF Base Unit for Local Flight
 (55) Kind of clearance Contact
 (56) Pilot's mission Self proficiency training flight on local CFR Clearance

(57) Nature of accident: mid-air collision
 III-B
 CLASSIFICATION FILED OR CHANGED

(58) Cause of accident: Loss of control following mid-air collision
 TO RESTRICTED
 CONFIDENTIAL
 RRB
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