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WAR DEPARTMENT

Accident No. \_\_\_\_\_

~~RESTRICTED~~ U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES  
REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

Blacksmith Lane, Orange Farm, Thorpe Marieux,  
Suffolk County, 2 miles due SE of Field

(1) Place \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Date 12 April 1964 (3) Time 0957  
Aircraft: (4) Type and model B-70 (5) A. F. No. 1088 (6) Station USAAF 126  
Organization: (7) 8th AF (8) 17th (H) (9) 711th Bomb (H)  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

| DOY  | NAME<br>(Last name first) | RATING | SERIAL NO. | RANK   | PROMOTION<br>CLASS | BRANCH | AIR FORCE OR<br>COMMAND | RESULT OF<br>PERSONNEL | USE OF<br>PARACHUTE |
|------|---------------------------|--------|------------|--------|--------------------|--------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| (10) | (11)                      | (12)   | (13)       | (14)   | (15)               | (16)   | (17)                    | (18)                   | (19)                |
| ✓    | KING, PHILIP D.           | P      |            | 2nd Lt | 10                 | AC     | 8th AF                  | Fatal                  | No                  |
| ✓    | DILLON, JOE F.            | P      |            | 2nd Lt | 10                 | AC     | 8th AF                  | Fatal                  | No                  |
| ✓    | ANDERSON, CLARENCE V.     | AC     |            | 2nd Lt | 10                 | AC     | 8th AF                  | Fatal                  | No                  |
| ✓    | FRUTKIN, JOE W.           | AC     |            | 2nd Lt | 10                 | AC     | 8th AF                  | Fatal                  | No                  |
| ✓    | HARRISON, WILLIAM H.      | P      |            | S/Sgt  | 10                 | AC     | 8th AF                  | Fatal                  | No                  |
| ✓    | VOLTE, LLOYD A.           | P      |            | S/Sgt  | 10                 | AC     | 8th AF                  | Fatal                  | No                  |
| ✓    | BUKER, JOE A.             | P      |            | Sgt    | 10                 | AC     | 8th AF                  | Major                  | No                  |
| ✓    | REITZEL, CARL S., JR.     | P      |            | Sgt    | 10                 | AC     | 8th AF                  | Major                  | No                  |
| ✓    | CAFFELL, DU CAN H.        | P      |            | Sgt    | 10                 | AC     | 8th AF                  | Fatal                  | No                  |
| ✓    | CHAYNOR, DONALD E.        | P      |            | Sgt    | 10                 | AC     | 8th AF                  | Major                  | No                  |

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) KING PHILIP D. (21) 1088 (22) 2nd Lt (23) 18 (24) AC  
(Last name) (Middle initial) (Rank) (Personal class) (Branch)  
Assigned (25) 8th AF (26) 711th Bomb (H) (27) 711th Bomb (H) (28) USAAF 126  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
Attached for flying (29) \_\_\_\_\_ (30) \_\_\_\_\_ (31) \_\_\_\_\_ (32) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Rank)

Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 30 Aug 63 (35) Pilot (36) 30 Aug 63 (37) 2 Dec 63  
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date)

First Pilot Hours:

(at the time of this accident)  
(38) This type 13310 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 11:00  
(39) This model 14125 (43) Instrument time last 30 days None  
(40) Last 90 days 21:15 (44) Night time last 6 months 39:50  
(41) Total 13310 (45) Night time last 30 days None

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE F

| DAMAGE                  | (46) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| (46) Aircraft _____     | Destroyed                  |
| (47) Engine(s) _____    |                            |
| (48) Propeller(s) _____ |                            |

(50) Weather at the time of accident HEAVY FOG VQ

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident Unknown  
(52) Cleared from Station 126 (53) To Station 126 (54) Kind of clearance Combat Mission

(55) Pilot's mission Combat

(56) Nature of accident Collision in full flight with object other than aircraft

(57) Cause of accident Pilot error (Judgment - Technique - 50)  
Instruments  
Bad weather - 50  
Other personnel supervisory \_\_\_\_\_

(58) Form 51 (Unsatisfactory Report) not submitted. BY JFC DATE 11-21-65

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## DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

Aircraft 42-31088 took off at 1040 on a combat mission. The visibility at the time was 100 yards. The take off was successful, however, after leaving the runway a straight course was not maintained, but changed slightly to the left. The airplane then struck a tree, which was located about 3 miles from the field, breaking off large branches, caving in the plexiglass nose of the ship and breaking off a large portion of the right horizontal stabilizer which was found at this point. The pilot then apparently attempted to land, for marks from the ball turret were seen first on the ground, and about 50 feet further propellers hit the ground. Distance between blade marks was wide, making it appear that the engines were turning at low RPM. The airplane then jumped a ditch and marks show where it made contact with the ground again, and slid into a single tree, where the ship's tail broke off and fire started. Three injured men ran out through the opening left where the tail broke off, and took shelter in the ditch, realizing the bombs might go off at any moment. The explosion occurred within three to four minutes after the fire started, and all personnel are believed to have been killed before the bombs exploded except the three, BTG, TG, and WGH, who escaped, but were badly burned.

It is recommended that all pilots be thoroughly checked on instrument take offs, with a heavily loaded aircraft and be kept proficient in such take offs by periodic checks from time to time.



Date 21 April 1944

Signature

William D. Ready  
Lt. Col., Air Corps

Frank M. Newman  
Major, Air Corps

Robert G. David  
Major, Air Corps



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447th Bombardment Group (B)  
AFG 559

15 April 1944

CERTIFICATE

The following is a statement obtained from Ball-Turret Sgt. Carl S. Meitzel, Jr., concerning the crash-accident involving the B-17 airplane piloted by Lt. Philip D. King:

"About fifteen (15) seconds after leaving the runway, it seemed like the Number 2 engine went out, sounding like a piece of paper stuck in an electric fan, and shaking the airplane. We must have hit a tree, but I'm not positive of it. I looked through the bombay and saw the engineer putting on his chute. There was no order from the pilot to put the chute on, and the emergency bell did not ring, but I went back into the waist, after seeing the engineer putting his chute on, following Sgt. Burek and Sgt. Grainger, who said, 'Let's get the H--- out of here!'. I just picked up my harness and we hit the ground. (We thought we were high enough to jump.) I seemed to be up against the ball turret, and Burek was on top of me. I pushed Burek off. When I looked up, the ship was broken in half like a scissors had whacked off the tail end in the location of the waist windows, and I followed Burek out of the ship through the hole and Grainger followed me. Halfway between the ball turret and the waist windows it was awfully hot, and I think I was burned there. When we got out we ran, and I happened to think of the bombs, told the boys about it and we made for a ditch. Just about the time we were lying down in the ditch there were three explosions, the first two soft, followed by a pause, and then the bombs exploded.

"We weren't on fire before we hit the ground.

"I think I was dazed from the crash, but I knew what I was doing all the time.

"The ball turret rounds kept popping right under me when I was lying on it, just after the crash. There were no rounds going off before we hit."

Ball-turret runner Sgt. John A. Burek had this much more to offer:

"Just before we hit, and the Number 2 engine was vibrating, I saw parts falling off the wing, or pieces of motor, coming from the location of the engine."

The three gunners corroborated in the feeling that the ship seemed very heavy that morning and did not respond as usual. They felt that they were on the runway a long time, but could not see the end of the runway.

*Arthur C. Weiser*  
ARTHUR C. WEISER  
Capt., M.C.  
Flight Surgeon  
721th Bomb Sqdn (B)

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447TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
A/C 559

14 April 1944

CERTIFICATE

Weather observations at 0945, 13 April 1944, at  
time of crash of A/C 42-31088:

Sky obscured, visibility 100 yards in dense fog,  
SFC wind - 220 degrees, 1-3 miles per hour.

*Estil L. Hamill*  
ESTIL L. HAMILL  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Staff Weather Officer

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~~SECRET~~  
447TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
APO 559

14-4-44

CERTIFICATE

Statement of crash of B-17G #42-31088 four miles south-west of this airfield. (To be attached to accident form No. 14.)

Unit contact flying weather prevailed in the immediate vicinity of this airfield at 1100 hours, April 12, 1944. Horizontal visibility 500 yards, cloud base, obscure - fog.

Between 1030 and 1100 hours, aircraft were taking off from this airfield on an operational mission. At 1049 hours the pilot in our weather ship, who was circling the field at the time, reported a large fire near end of the runway in use. We immediately radioed our men in the recon car which was stationed at the end of the runway asking if they observed a fire or anything that looked like a crash occurred. They replied in the negative.

At 1050 hours, I heard a loud explosion in the southwest toward Lavenham. I could not see any smoke or fire due to the poor visibility, but assumed an aircraft had crashed and the bombs were detonating. The men in our recon car still could not determine the source of the explosion. On the advice of the Commanding Officer, who was in the tower at the time of the accident, I dispatched Ordnance officers to determine the source of the explosion and a jeep equipped with fire-fighting material.

*Thomas M. Tracy*  
THOMAS M. TRACY  
1st Lt., A.C.,  
Duty Flying Control  
Officer

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447TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (B)  
APO 559

15 April 1944.

CERTIFICATE

Airplane 42-31068 crashed 12 April 1944

Airplane took off on one diagonal. Navigators table lamp inoperative.

Last flight before mission was made by Lt. J. C. Brown. Only write up was #3 fuel pressure gage incorrect. Fuel pressure was adjusted same day after flight.

Airplane hours before mission was 176:25

Engine time was same as aircraft time.

50 Hr. inspection completed on 5 April 1944

25 Hr. inspection completed on 11 April 1944.

Airplane received in Squadron March 1, 1944 after being in 454th Sub-depot since 15 January 1944 for severe battle damage, including inner wing panel change.

Sgt. Peano, H. A., Crew Chief

Sgt. Talbert, R. L., Asst. Crew Chief

*Lawrence H. Wilson*  
LAWRENCE H. WILSON,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Engineering Officer  
711th Bomb Sq. (H).

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447th Bombardment Group (H)  
APO 859

15 April 1941.

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At the request of the Group Operations Office, I am  
certify that the below named officers and enlisted men of  
Crew 44 were in good physical condition:

1. Lt. Philip D. King  
2. Lt. John F. Dillon  
3. Lt. Clarence V. Anderson  
4. Lt. John H. Truner  
PTG S/Sgt William L. Harrison  
RC S/Sgt Lloyd A. Holtz  
PTG Sgt. John A. Burek  
TG Sgt. Carl C. Reitzel Jr.  
WGL Sgt. Duncan H. Campbell  
WGR Sgt. Donald E. Granger

Having been personally acquainted with this crew since  
the time of their arrival on this field, I may state that each  
Officer and Enlisted Man of this crew were of the highest  
calibre, that they were not given to intemperance, and at  
the time of their accident, they were in excellent physical  
condition. Morale of the crew was excellent, being eager to  
accomplish their mission to the best of their ability. There  
is no reason at all apparent which could cause their accident  
from a physical standpoint.

*Arthur C. Weber*  
ARTHUR C. WEBER,  
Captain, I. C.,  
Flight Surgeon.

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360.33

1st Wrapper Ind.

B-N-4

Hq, Eighth Air Force, APO 634, c/o Postmaster, New York, N.Y.

TO: Chief, Flying Safety, AAF, Winston Salem 1, N.C.

1. Transmitted herewith WDAAF Form No. 14 and Allied papers on the following aircraft accident:

a. 2nd Lt. Philip D. King, B-17G number 42-31088.

2. Concur.

For the Commanding General:

1 Incl:

As above.

W. H. HOLDS.

A.G.D.,

Adjutant General.

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