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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

NARRATIVE STATELENT

Accident occured during formation landing upon return from combat mission. The tower had warned all aircraft to land short as the runway was very slippery and the wind was gusty. A reasonably normal landing was made, but the aircraft's left tire was allowed to hit the edge of the pierced steel plank runway and blew the tire. Ship then swerved to the left and came to rest 90° to runway with emanage ten (10) feet from edge of runway. Instead of pulling ship on clear of runway and allow greater margin of clearance for ships landing, the engines were stopped. This resulted in further damage and accidents submitted on separate, reports.

RESPONSIBILITY

Personnel error - Poor pilot technique, 60%.

Extenuating circumstances - Severe gusty wind, slippery runway, bomb load, 40%.

ACTION TO PREVENT REPETITION

All pilots have been instructed in necessity of landing short on slippery runway with bomb load and danger of leaving ship near runway when other ships are landing.

MAR TOURS

DR SHO Sie
LEGY LEGIONOVICES
Colonel, Mr Corps
Commending
JOHN S. HOPPOCK
Lt. Colonel, Mr Corps,
FRANCIS J. HOERMANN,
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps, Acft. Accident Officer.
While I Hayour
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CHARLES B. HODGES JR.
Without Co. James
HICHARD E. PROUTY, Captain, Air Corps,
Acft. Investigating Officer.

Signature	 (Inv	restigating Officer)	
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725TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H) 451ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) APO 520 U.S. Army

11 March 1945.

ACCIDENT STATEMENT

On the evening of March 9, 1945 at approximately 1745 we were returning from a mission with a full load of bombs. All the flights from this Group returned to the base at approximately the same time and any flights that came over the field the tower was clearing to peel off and land. Lending was to the east, there was a rain cloud over the field at the time which cut down the visibility and made the runway as slippery as ice. The tower called all ships and told them to use extreme caution when landing as the runway was slippery and there was a cross wind from the left at 20 m.p.h. When our flight came in to peel off there were at least ten ships already in the pattern but we were cleared to peel off which we did. We were flying number four position, making us the fifth ship to land in our flight. Due to the large number of ships already in the pattern our flight had to increase the size of the pattern making much larger pattern than usual. Several times: I lost sight of the field because of the poor visibility and the size of the pattern. About the time we were on the base leg the tower cleared another flight to peel off. When we were coming in on the final approach one of the ships of this other flight cut inside of us and was off to our left and about 100 ft. below us. He must have seen us coming in on the final approach because he pulled up his wheels and started to go around and the tower gave us the green light. As this ship pulled up to go around we passed directly behind him trying to get lined up straight with the runway. We hit his propwash while we were still about 200 feet off of the ground thus adding to the already very turbulent air. I was fighting the controls all the time trying to keep in line with the runway. I dropped my left wing to compensate for drift on the approach there was a ship landing about 1000 yards ahead of us and his prop wash was hitting us also. I was just on the verge of going around myself when the ship seemed to straighten up fairly well. Seeing that I could still land on the first third of the runway I eased off my power and made a normal landing. As soon as the ship touched the ground it began pulling to the left side of the runway. I had the throttles fully retracted and applied full right rudder but the ship was still pulling to the left. I began to ease on the right brake to try and straighten the ship up and still holding in right rudder. We must have been skidding along the runway because full right rudder and full right brake din'nt help to straighten it out. So I applied full power on number one and two engines. Just as the ship started to straighten out the left tire caught on the left edge of the runway and blew out. That immediately turned the ship to the left at an angle of 90° to the runway. I applied full brake on both wheels and yelled at the eqpilot to cut the switches and the crash bar which he did. The co-pilot also shoved the mixture into idle cut-off. The combined results of full brakes and the soft mud at the side of the runway brought us to a sudden stop. The ship was sitting facing the north at an angle of 90° to the runway and the tail was about 10 feet off the edge of the matting. Oil around the Macelle of number 3 engine was burning, the engineer yelled fire, so we proceeded to

leave the ship with much haste. The bombardied opened the bomb bay doors and every one on the flight deck left the ship via the bomb bays and started running fearing the bombs would go off. I stoped long enough to grab the fire extinguisher on my way out. I was the last one to leave the ship. By the time I got out the fire on number 3 engine had gone out of its own accord.

All the men in the waist were out before the props had stopped turning ever. One ship went by us before I got out and another came by just after I got out. I got back in the ship to call the tower to cease all landing operations because of the crack up. When I went back into the ship to call the tower I handed the very pistol along with two red flares to one of the crewman who in turn gave them to the O.D. The O.D. had arrived on the scenes several minutes before and when he got the Very Pistol he shot off a double red flare. As the radio was warming up I could hear the tower telling all ships to use extreme caution on landing as the runway was slippery and there was a cross wind from the left at 20 m.p.h. He never mentioned the crack up, evidently he was unaware that any thing was wrong. About this time some one began pounding on the side of the ship and yelling "Get out of the plane, there is another ship coming in". I cut the switches, the crash bar, got out of the ship and started running. When I got to what I thought was a safe distance I stopped and looked around. Ship # 36 was coming down the runway trying to miss our ship. I noticed that his left wheel was skidding, ie, not turning over at all. His left wing hit the tail of our ship slicing off both our rudders and vertical stabilizers just above the horizontal stabilizer. Just after his ship hit ours, his left tire blew out. He pulled off the left side of the runway.

After number 36 clipped our rudder and vertical stabilizer off the 0.D. shot another double red flare. About a minute later number 40 came in for his landing. He started skidding about the same place we did and was headed off the runway straight for our ship. He must have seen that he could not stay on the runway because he applied left brake and full power on number 3 and 4 engines thus turning the ship in a circle to the left. His ship slid into our ship tail first, his fusulage striking the trailing edge of our left wing behind number 1 engine Nacelle. All the men in ship 36 came streaming out, the men in the waist via the left waist window and the men on the flight deck via the bomb bay. The pilot of ship 36 did a very nice job, by turning

to the left he undoubtedly saved the life of every one on the ship.

About this time the tower got on the ball and began sending the ships around. Several crash trucks, wreckers, and ambulances had arrived on the scene as well as about 100 men. Every time a ship came in on the approach everybody started to run for cover as all ships carried a full bomb load. The tower then reversed the direction of landing and four more ships landed.

No one was injured in any way. After all the ships had landed we all removed our personal equipment from the ships and were taken back to the

squadron area in a truck.

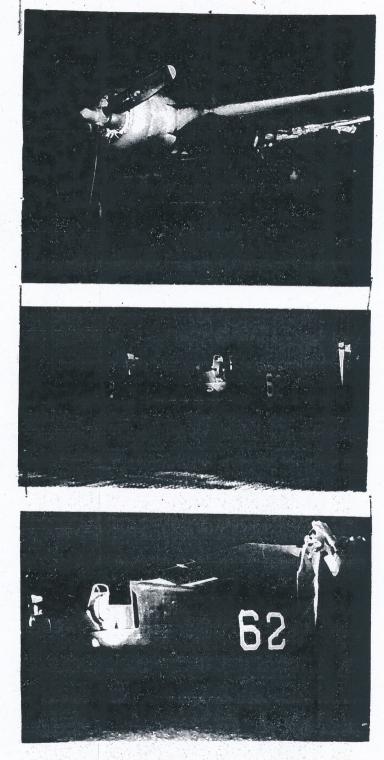
William N. SILLIMAN 2nd Lt., AC

STATÉMENT

On the afternoon of 9 March 1945, we were returning from a combat mission in ship #62 with our bomb load. There was a thunder-storm over the field at the time of our return, making the visibility very poor.

As we were turning on our final approach, another ship, which had just peeled off, started to cut in ahead of us but turned out of our way and went around. Upon receiving a green light from the tower, we continued on our approach for a landing. Due to a rather stiff cross-wind and extreme turbulances, the pilot, Lt. Silliman, had difficulty in keeping control of the aircraft, although, he succeeded in making a normal landing. Just after the ship had touched the runway, it started going to the left so the pilot hit the right rudder but that did not seem to have any effect. He then applied the brakes to slow the ship down. Because of the slippery runway, we started skidding to the left and as the left tire hit the edge of the runway, it blew out; causing us to swerve off 50 the left of the runway. All of the crew immediately got out of the ship as other ships were still coming in for landings. As ship #36 landed, it started skidding to the left and hit the tail of our ship as it passed by us. Ship #40 also started skidding to the left, after it had landed, and as it drew near to our ship it ground looped to the left. It's tail section hitting our left wing.

Corl B. Roberts
2nd Lt., AC
Co-Pilot



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WAR DEPARTMENT

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"U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

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7/69 REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

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