

WAR DEPARTMENT
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES
REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

ACCIDENT No. **120**
45-7-22-508

(1) Place Castelluccio Airfield, Italy (2) Date 22 July 1944 (3) Time 0730
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-24H (5) A. F. No. 42-72580 (6) Station Castelluccio A/F, Italy
Organization: (7) 15th AF (8) 451st Bomb (9) 726th Bomb
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

DUTY (10)	NAME (Last name first) (11)	RATING (12)	SERIAL NO. (13)	RANK (14)	PERSONNEL CLASS (15)	BRANCH (16)	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND (17)	RESULT TO PERSONNEL (18)	USE OF PARACHUTE (19)
01	P Morfit, Charles B.	P	Q-806495	1st Lt	26 01	AC	15th	Minor	No
04	CP Skinner, Curtiss H.	P	Q-738041	1st Lt	01	AC	15th	Fatal	No
65	N McSpadden, Joseph E.	N	Q-808108	1st Lt	18 01	AC	15th	Fatal	No
61	B Aspinwall, Peter G.	B	Q-706775	2nd Lt	19 01	AC	15th	Fatal	No
62	E Walks, Charles E.	E	39379743	T/Sgt	20	AAF	15th	Fatal	No
71	RO Ahearn, George L.	RO	31169141	T/Sgt	30 20	AAF	15th	Fatal	No
62	AE Fowle, Frank M.	AE	31228387	S/Sgt	38 20	AAF	15th	Fatal	No
67	AG Callison, Warren G.	AG	20830960	S/Sgt	38 20	AAF	15th	Fatal	No
64	AG McGoldrick, Edward F.	AG	32479112	S/Sgt	38 20	AAF	15th	Minor	No
64	AG Gumbert, Robert P.	AG	33794061	S/Sgt	38 20	AAF	15th	Minor	No

PROCEEDINGS OF ACCIDENT
(20) Morfit Charles B. (21) Q-806495 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 18 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned (25) 15th Air Force (26) 451st Bomb (27) 726th Bomb (28) Castelluccio A/F
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) (30) (31) (32)
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 6-30-43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 6-30-43 Instrument rating (37) None
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date) (Date)
First PILOT HOURS:
(at the time of this accident)
(38) This type B-24 21:35 (39) Instrument time last 5 months
(39) This model B-24 21:05 (40) Instrument time last 30 days
(40) Last 90 days 21:35 (41) Night time last 6 months
(41) Total 673:10 (42) Night time last 30 days

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(43) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft W 5	Aircraft completely destroyed by bombs and fire.
(47) Engine(s) W 5	
(48) Propeller(s) W 5	

(50) Weather at the time of accident CAVU
(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No
(52) Cleared from Castelluccio (53) To Combat (54) Kind of clearance Combat
(55) Pilot's mission Combat
(56) Nature of accident Aircraft settled back onto runway after takeoff hitting fuselage and pulled aircraft to earth resulting in crash off the end of the runway.
(57) Cause of accident Pilot error in use of poor technique in takeoff, premature retraction of landing gear aggravated the settling of aircraft back onto runway.

(58) No

RESTRICTED

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

Takeoff proceeded in a normal manner until aircraft became airborne. Immediately after becoming airborne, the aircraft was pulled up in an abrupt angle, then followed an overcontrol of elevators resulting in the ship again striking the runway. Then again the aircraft was pulled into the air and at this time the retraction of the landing gear was begun. The aircraft again settled onto the runway dragging on the partially retracted landing gear and the underside of the fuselage. This slowed the aircraft to less than flying speed and pulled the ship back to the ground. Aircraft then slid off the end of the runway and came to rest, fire and explosion followed.

Robert E. Eaton
ROBERT E. L. EATON,
Colonel, Air Corps.

Ellis E. Eno
ELLIS E. ENO,
Lt. Col., Air Corps.

Lydie L. Wagner
LYDIE L. WAGNER,
Major, Medical Corps.

W. H. McManus, Jr.
W. H. McMANUS, JR.,
Major, Air Corps.

Leland A. Younkin
LELAND A. YOUNKIN,
Major, Air Corps,
Aircraft Accident Officer.

Signature _____
(Investigating Officer)

Date _____

HEADQUARTERS
451ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer
APO 520 U. S. Army

31 July 1944

SUBJECT: Witness of Aircraft Accident.

TO : Whom it may concern.

I was Control Tower Officer on 22 July 1944 and at 0730 observed Aircraft No. 42-72580 take off on a Combat Mission. The aircraft appeared to rise off the runway in a normal manner, all engines appeared to be functioning properly. The aircraft climbed and the wheels were being retracted, the aircraft began apparently to settle or mush until it began to slide along the dirt strip beyond the runway, when suddenly it came to a stop beyond the hill at the end of the runway and burst into flames and exploded. The day was clear with very little wind and CAVU weather. The aircraft was fully loaded with 6,000# of bombs, 2700 gallons of gas and maximum ammunition aboard.

Leland A. Yunkin
LELAND A. YUNKIN,
Major, Air Corps,
Operations Officer