

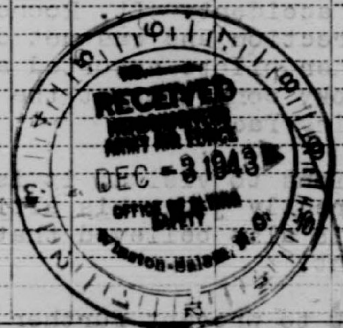
WAR DEPARTMENT  
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES  
REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

084  
44-11-19-74  
4

45045

(1) Place Hancock Bombing Range (2) Date 19 November 1943 (3) Time 1730  
 AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model A-20C (5) A. F. No. 41-19169 (6) Station Laurel AAF  
 Organization: (7) 3rd AF, III Bomb. Com. (8) 416th Bomb Gr. (L) (9) 670th Bomb Sqdn. (L)  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)  
 PERSONNEL 3 3B BLL BLL 4551

DUTY	NAME (Last name first)	RATING	SERIAL NO.	RANK	PERSONNEL CLASS	BRANCH	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND	RESULT TO PERSONNEL	USE OF PARACHUTE
(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
P	Rooney Robert J.	P	O-26102	2nd Lt	OO	AC	3rd AF	None	None



PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) Rooney, Robert J. (21) O-26102 (22) 2nd Lt. (23) OO (24) AC  
 (Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)  
 Assigned (25) 3rd AF, III Bomb. Com. (26) 416th Bomb Gr. (27) 670th B. Sq. (L) (28) Laurel AAF - D  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Attached for flying (29) 3rd AF, III Bomb. Com. (30) 416th Bomb Gr. (31) 670th B. Sq. (L) (32) Laurel AAF  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Original rating (33) P (34) 6-1-43 Present rating (35) P (36) 6-1-43 Instrument rating (37) 8-28-43  
 (Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)  
 (38) This type 46:25 (47) Instrument time last 6 months 27:00  
 (39) This model 66:30 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 13:15  
 (40) Last 90 days 66:30 (44) Night time last 6 months 37:15  
 (41) Total 503:40 (45) Night time last 30 days 12:45

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(40) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>X 3</u>	<u>Leading edge of right wing damaged</u>
(47) Engine(s) <u>/ /</u>	
(48) Propeller(s) <u>/ /</u>	

(50) Weather at the time of accident Clear-3 to 5 miles visibility. Light smoke-wind calm ceiling unlimited.  
 (51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No  
 (52) Cleared from Laurel AAF (53) To Hancock Bomb. Range (54) Kind of clearance Contact local  
 (55) Pilot's mission Skip Bombing  
 (56) Nature of accident Struck tree on skip bombing mission  
 (57) Cause of accident Sun in eyes on skip bombing run

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

On Friday, 19 November 1943, 2nd Lt. Robert J. Rooney was on a skip bombing mission at Hancock Bombing Range, Hancock County, Mississippi. On making his first run of Northeast to Southwest, Lt. Rooney dropped his bomb and on leaving the target struck a dead tree with the leading edge of his right wing. Resulting damage was a hole approximately 10 inches in diameter which completely penetrated the dural sheet.

Due to the time of takeoff (1600) it is believed the sun did interfere with the pilot's vision and this was the contributing factor to the cause of the accident. Lt. Rooney was instructed to make his run in this direction and was not disobeying orders in that respect. Also, other pilots reported as did the weather station, that a hazy or smoky condition at the target area is believed to be a contributing factor.

Due to these obstructions to vision, it is believed that Lt. Rooney was not able to correctly judge his altitude and as a result struck the tree. It is also believed that Lt. Rooney is not responsible for the accident.

It is recommended that to prevent further accidents of this nature, Section Two (2), Range Radio Procedure, Operations Memo. 90-1, Range Regulations, Office of the Base Operations Officer, Key Field, Meridian, Mississippi, be amended to include "The direction in which the Flight Commander wishes to make his bombing run".

Section Four (4), Use of Range, of the same memorandum, states in paragraph two (2), "Planes will attempt to fly in a Northeast or Southwest direction over the target". It is believed that if the choice of direction of the bombing run, either Northeast or Southwest, is left to the Flight Commander, the safety of the flight will be greatly increased. This recommendation has been made to Key Field Operations and the amendment is being made.

Signature

*Robert B. Gex, Jr.*  
ROBERT B. GEX, JR.,

Captain, Air Corps,

Accident Investigating  
Officer

Date 29 November 1943

670TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)  
416TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)  
ARMY AIR FIELD

Laurel, Mississippi,  
21 November 1943.

S T A T E M E N T

While skip bombing at the Hancock Bombing Range Friday, 19 November in an A-20C, 41-19169 I hit a tree with my right wing approximately six feet from the wing tip.

The run was made from Northeast to Southwest as specified by Key Field Range Regulations and 416th Bombardment Group (L) training Memorandum No. 57. The visibility was poor and the sun was directly in my eyes. Since this was my first mission on the Hancock Range I was not familiar with the terrain.

I returned to the field satisfactorily no injuries were sustained.

*Robert J. Rooney*  
ROBERT J. ROONEY,  
2nd Lt, Air Corps.

670TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)  
416TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)  
ARMY AIR FIELD

Laurel, Mississippi,  
21 November 1943.

S T A T E M E N T

On the afternoon of November 19, 1943, 2nd Lt. Robert J. Rooney, was scheduled in A-20C, 41-19169 for a skip-bombing mission. 2nd Lt. Robert J. Rooney took off at 1600 and landed at 1815.

Immediately after the pilot releases his first bomb, at 1730 (Local Time), the right wing made contact with a dead tree approximately seven feet from wing tip. The run was made from north east to south west as specified by Key Field, "Range Regulations" and 416th Bomb Gp (L) "Training Memo No 57". The pilot stated that the sun obstructed visibility and he did not sight the tree. Interrogation of other pilots on the range, at the time, indicated a low hanging haze over target area. This was pilots first mission on Hancock Range and lack of familiarity with terrain of the area, appears to be contributing facts. Absence of any information on possible instructions on the range prevented the inclusion of this material in the briefing. The briefing covered factual material contained in Key Field "Operations Memorandum" No 90-1 and 416th Bomb Gp "Training Memorandum" No 57, and accompanying diagrams.

No interrogation reports were available to indicate the conditions on the range, since the first scheduled flight on Hancock Range, had not returned when 2nd Lt. Robert J. Rooney's flight took off.

2nd Lt. Robert J. Rooney returned to field satisfactorily. The airplane is being repaired by the squadron.

No injuries were sustained.

*William J. Meag*  
WILLIAM J. MEAG,  
Capt, Air Corps,  
Commanding.

670TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)  
416TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

Laurel, Miss.,  
19 Nov 43.

OPERATIONS ORDER)

NUMBER

167)

E X T R A C T

In compliance with verbal orders of the Operations Officer, the following named personnel of this organization are authorized to make training flights listed below:

\* \* \* \* \*

PLANE TYPE & NO.	A-20C-41-19169	TAKE-OFF ON OR BEFORE	2100Z
PILOT, 2nd Lt. Robert J. Rooney		LAND ON OR BEFORE	2315Z MISS 21/13
		CREW	None

\* \* \* \* \*

By Order of Captain MENC:

CHESTER R. JACKSON,  
1st Lt, AC,  
Operations Officer.

OFFICIAL:

*Chester R. Jackson*  
CHESTER R. JACKSON,  
1st Lt, AC,  
Operations Officer.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR BASE  
OFFICE OF THE BASE COMMANDER  
LAUREL, MISSISSIPPI

360.33-Aircraft Accident

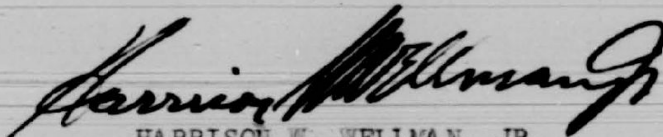
30 November 1943

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident Report

TO: Headquarters, Office of Flying Safety, Army Air Forces, Winston-Salem, N. C.

1. In compliance with AAF Regulation 62-14, attached is WD, AAF Form No. 14, covering aircraft accident Aircraft A-20C, AF 41-19169, 19 November 1943.

2. The findings and recommendations of the investigating officer are approved.



HARRISON W. WELLMAN, JR.  
Lt Colonel, Air Corps  
Commanding

1 Incl.

WD, AAF Form No. 14 w/4 exhibits

1335



Accident No.

44-11-19-74

Date

Checked by

*[Signature]*

12-4-43

Analyzed by

*[Signature]*

12-4-43

Copied for Wright  
Field by

Notes

1225:9-43

Accident No. 44-11-19-74

Pilot's Name Rooney, Robert J.

02 Nature Group Collision in fall

05 Specific Nature W/ tree

61 Underlying Nature Misjudged distance

30% 02 Cause Group Technique

17 Specific Cause Lack of experience

17 Underlying Cause in this area  
Lack of care

30% 33 Cause Group Weather

85 Specific Cause

31 Underlying Cause

40% 07 Supervisory

38 Operations

53 Judgment