

WAR DEPARTMENT
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

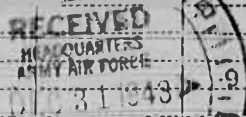
44-12-21-13

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place Laurel AAF, Laurel, Mississippi (2) Date 21 December 1943 (3) Time 1634
 AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model A-20G-10 (5) A. F. No. 42-54048 (6) Station LAAF, Laurel, Miss.
 Organization: (7) IIIAF, IIIB, Com (8) 416th B. Gp. (9) 668th Bomb Sqn. (L)
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

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. Hill, Luther E.	P	0-806064	2nd Lt.	20	AC	III AF	Minor	None
	G. Brown, Floyd E.	G	15338062	Sgt.	20	AC	III AF	None	None



PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) Hill, Luther E. (Last name) (21) 0-806064 (Serial number) (22) 2nd Lt. (Rank) (23) 18 (Personnel class) (24) AC (Branch)
 Assigned (25) IIIAF, IIIB, Com (Command and Air Force) (26) 416th B. Gp. (Group) (27) 668th B. Sqn. (L) (Squadron) (28) LAAF, Laurel, Miss. (Station)
 Attached for flying (29) IIIAF, IIIB, Com (Command and Air Force) (30) 416th B. Gp. (Group) (31) 668th B. Sqn. (L) (Squadron) (32) LAAF, Laurel, Miss. (Station)
 Original rating (33) P (Rating) (34) 6-1-43 (Date) Present rating (35) P (Rating) (36) 6-1-43 (Date) Instrument rating (37) 12-10-43 (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type 149:15 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 27:15
 (39) This model 71:40 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 5:30
 (40) Last 90 days 120:55 (44) Night time last 6 months 30:10
 (41) Total 158:50 (45) Night time last 30 days 20:40

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>X</u>	Nose wheel broken off, fuselage wrinkled
(47) Engine(s) <u>X</u>	Sudden stoppage of both engines
(48) Propeller(s) <u>X</u>	Both propellers bent

(50) Weather at the time of accident High scattered low scattered at 4000 ft. Visibility 5 miles with light smoke. W-Wind 6 miles per hour.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No
 (52) Cleared from LAAF, Laurel, Miss (53) Local (54) Kind of clearance Contact

(55) Pilot's mission Fixed Gunnery

(56) Nature of accident Takeoff

(57) Cause of accident Nose wheel broke off during takeoff.

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

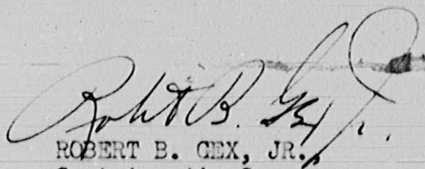
1. On 21 December 1943, at approximately 1630, Lt. Luther E. Hill, in an A-20C-10, ASN 42-54048, taxied out to takeoff on Runway 23. Lt. Hill alligned the ship with the runway and opened the throttles and as he neared takeoff manifold pressure the nose wheel started to vibrate or shimmy and broke off. Upon feeling the ship start to vibrate, Lt. Hill cut the throttles and applied the brakes. The ships nose and propellers struck the ground and the plane slid to a stop.

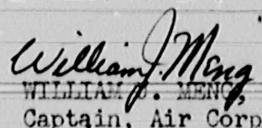
2. The following information is submitted as possible causes of the accident. Actual cause of the accident could not be determined:

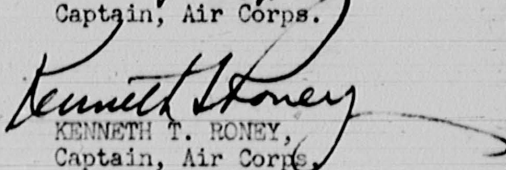
- a. The strut when found had the safety pin which holds the snubbing pin in place, hanging out and not clipped in the proper place. The snubbing pin was not engaged but was pulled as if for toeing. (This strut was moved from its original resting place to in front of the airplane by an unidentified enlisted man before investigating officers arrived on the scene, which was approximately 5 minutes after the crash. It is not known whether or not this pin and safety pin were removed before the investigating officers arrived or not.) Also, the tracks of the airplane leading to the crash showed that the nose wheel had shimmed violently before breaking off and it skidded sideways approximately three (3) feet before being snapped off.
- b. Technical Order 01-40AL-10, which deals with the re-working of nose wheel well tunnel left and right side of the A-20G series, had not been complied with on this airplane, due to the fact the kit for this compliance has not been received. The left side of the nose wheel well was in such a condition after the nose wheel collapsed that it could not be told whether or not this was a result or cause of the failure.
- c. Side brace, part #4757030, sheared completely off just above the knuckle where it bolts on to the collar which is around the nose wheel strut. This break was extremely clean and had the appearance of possibly being crystallized.

Recommendations: None.

Accident Investigating Committee:


ROBERT B. COX, JR.
Captain, Air Corps,
Investigating Officer.


WILLIAM J. MENG
Captain, Air Corps.

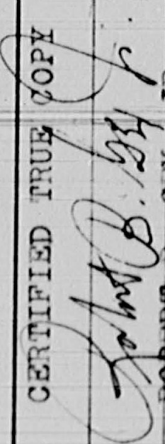

KENNETH T. RONEY,
Captain, Air Corps.

Signature _____
(Investigating Officer)

43

Date _____

12/21/43 DATE
 T/Sgt C.L. Ball CREW CHIEF OR AERIAL ENGINEER
 Laurel Army Air Base STATION
 3rd B.C.
 3rd A.F.
 56th TW GROUP NO. AND TYPE
 416th Bomb (L)
 668th Bomb (L)
 A-20G-10 AIRCRAFT MODEL
 42-54048 AIRCRAFT SERIAL NO.

PERS. CLASS	NAME - RANK - ORGANIZATION	USE AS DIRECTED LOCALLY	ALWAYS ENTER DUTY SYMBOLS. WHEN APPLICABLE, ENTER N. NIGHT OR I. INSTRUMENT. ENTER TIME FLOWN THEREUNDER				FLIGHT DATA		
			DUTY	N OR I	DUTY	N OR I	TERMINALS AND MISSION	NO. OF LANDINGS	
18	LAAF 0797803 Ebenstein, Gustave, 1st Lt 668	22	P				FROM: L O TO: G A L	13:30	1
20	LAAF 668 Hibbs, Charles L. S/Sgt 39099657	20	G				MISSION: T	14:30	1
18	668 Hill, Luther E. 2nd Lt, LAAB	14	P				FROM: L O TO: G A L	16:25	1
20	668 Brown, Floyd E. Sgt 15338062		G				MISSION: T		1
Nose wheel snapped off when starting take-off run. Airplane damaged. No injury to personnel. s/ Luther E. Hill 2nd Lt, AC							FROM:		
CERTIFIED TRUE COPY							MISSION:		
 ROBERT B. GEX, JR Captain, Air Corps Investigating Officer							FROM:		

WAR DEPARTMENT A. A. F. FORM NO. 1 2-2-42

FLIGHT REPORT - OPERATIONS

CHECKED: [] OPER. CLERK
 LEGIBLE AND CORRECT

TRANSCRIBED: [] OPER. CLERK
 TOTAL FLIGHT TIME ENTERED ON FORM 1A

TOTAL FLIGHT TIME 1:00

FLIGHT REPORT - ENGINEERING

INSPECTION STATUS

	DATE OF OR HOURS DUE	INSPECTED TODAY	
		BY	STATION
PREFLIGHT	12/21/43	Ketchin	LAAB
DAILY	12/20/43	Hart	LAAB
25 HOURS	630:25		
50 HOURS	635:25		
100 HOURS	630:00		
Valves	300:00		
Valves	300:00		

SERVICING AT STATION OF TAKE-OFF (CHECK IMMEDIATELY BEFORE TAKE-OFF)

SERVICE	FUEL (GALLONS)		OIL (QUARTS)								RADIATOR CHECKED	
	SERV-ICED	IN TANKS	NO. 1		NO. 2		NO. 3		NO. 4			
			SERV-ICED	IN TANKS	SERV-ICED	IN TANKS	SERV-ICED	IN TANKS	SERV-ICED	IN TANKS		
1ST	-	400	-	88	-	90						
2ND	129	400	16	92	8	90						
3RD												
4TH												
5TH												

INSPECTION OF AUXILIARY EQUIPMENT

EQUIPMENT	SYMBOL	INSPECTED BY	STATION
BOMBARDMENT	H	Horvath	LAAB
GUNNERY	H	Horvath	LAAB
CHEMICAL			
COMMUNICATIONS			
PHOTOGRAPHIC			
NAVIGATION			

STATUS TODAY

1.	2.
3.	4.

EXPLANATION: No oxygen equip. compass swing over due - Flo lights out
T.O. 01-1-83 N.C.W.

EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE

WHEN THE "STATUS TODAY" IS INDICATED BY A RED SYMBOL AND AN "EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE" HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED BY AN AUTHORIZED ENGINEERING OFFICER, THE PILOT OF THE AIRCRAFT WILL SIGN THIS RELEASE BEFORE FLIGHT.

RELEASED FOR FLIGHT

1. G. Ebenstein
2. L.E. Hill

REMARKS: PILOTS AND MECHANICS - SEE INSTRUCTIONS INSIDE FRONT COVER.

#1 C.K. G. Ebenstein, 1st Lt. A.C.
#2 Nose wheel broken, propellers bent, fuselage wrinkled. Hill, Luther E. 2nd Lt. A.C.

#1 Service Cpl D.M. Hart

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

ROBERT B. GEX, JR.
Captain, AC
Investigating Officer

AIRCRAFT AND ENGINE TIME RECORD (ENTER IN HOURS AND MINUTES)

ENGINE	NO. 1	NO. 2	NO. 3	NO. 4
HOURS TO DATE	89:25	206:25		
HOURS TODAY				
TOTAL				
OIL CHANGE DUE	600:00	600:00		
CUNO CLEANING DUE	99:35	211:30		
	HOURS TO DATE		620:00	
AIRCRAFT	HOURS TODAY			
	TOTAL			

43

ENGINE DATA

(1) 42-174901 ENGINE SERIAL NO.	(2) 42-82664 ENGINE SERIAL NO.	(3) _____ ENGINE SERIAL NO.	(4) _____ ENGINE SERIAL NO.
GP-2600-23 ENGINE MODEL			

AIRCRAFT DATA

42-54048 AIRCRAFT SERIAL NO.	A-20G-10 AIRCRAFT MODEL	AAP COMPONENT
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AIRCRAFT ORG. DATA

668th Bomb (I) SQUADRON NO. AND TYPE	5rd B.C.C. AIR FORCE	56th T.W. COMMAND, CORPS AREA OR DEPT.	416th Bomb (I) GROUP NO. AND TYPE
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12-21-43
DATE

Laurel, Miss
STATION

T/SET G.L. Ball
CREW CHIEF OR AERIAL ENGINEER

STATEMENT

On 21 December 1943, at approximately 1630, I, 2nd Lt. Luther E. Hill, was scheduled for a gunnery mission. Before entering my airplane, an A-20G, ASN 42-54048, I made a visual check of same. The snubbing pin was in securely and the rest of the ship seemed to be in order.

I started the engines and called the tower for taxi and takeoff instructions and was directed to Runway 23 and to stand by at holding line. I did not notice any vibration of the nose wheel while taxiing. After checking my engines, I called the Tower and received permission to takeoff on Runway 23. I lined the ship up on the Runway and applied power for takeoff. As the plane started rolling, I noticed a slight vibration of the nose wheel, so I immediately closed the throttles. The nose wheel then collapsed.

Luther E. Hill
LUTHER E. HILL,
2nd Lt. AC,
668th Bomb Sqdn.

Sworn to and subscribed before me on this the 22 day of December 1943.

Robert B. Gex, Jr.
ROBERT B. GEX, JR.,
Captain, AC,
Investigating Officer.

STATEMENT

I, Floyd E. Brown, ASN 15338062, was in the rear seat of airplane #254048, when Lt. Hill started to takeoff. I was sitting facing the tail of the airplane. I noticed a slight vibration and the plane's nose hit the ground. I then jumped out of the airplane to see if the pilot was all right. When I jumped out I noticed the nose wheel just behind the tracks where the nose and propellers of the plane hit the runway.

Floyd E. Brown.

FLOYD E. BROWN,
Sgt. ASN 15338062,
668th Bomb Sqdn.

Sworn to and subscribed before me on this the 22 day of
December 1943.

Robert B. Gex, Jr.
ROBERT B. GEX, JR.,
Captain, Air Corps,
Investigating Officer.

STATEMENT

I, Dyel M. Hart, ASN 39682923, was acting as crew chief in the absence of the regular crew chief on Army Airplane 42-54048 on 21 December 1943.

M/Sgt. Kitchens of the 668th Bomb Sqdn., 416th Bomb Group, pre-flighted my airplane on 21 December 1943, while I went to dinner. When I returned my airplane had not left on a mission so I performed minor maintenance and checked the shimmy dampener and snubbing pin before the plane flew on its first mission. The snubbing pin was safetied in place. When the ship returned I refueled it and added oil. About 4:15, a Lieutenant and gunner came out to get my ship to go on a strafing mission. I was washing the airplane at the time the armament man loaded the guns and I saw the Lieutenant walk around the airplane inspecting it. I did not check the snubbing pin before the airplane flew the second time. However, I believe it was in place because I had been around the airplane since it had returned from its first mission.

Dyel M. Hart
DYEL M. HART,
Cpl., ASN 39682923,
668th Bomb Sqdn.

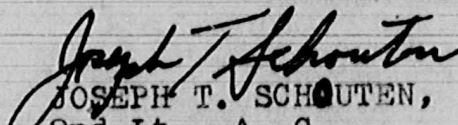
Sworn to and subscribed before me on this the 24 day of December 1943.

Robert B. Gex, Jr.
ROBERT B. GEX, JR.,
Captain, AC,
Investigating Officer.

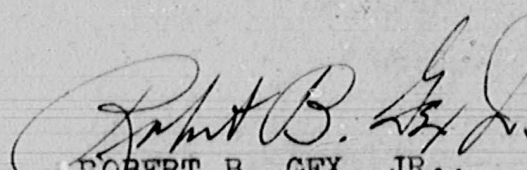
STATEMENT

I, 2nd Lt. Joseph T. Schauten, was on duty in the Control Tower at Laurel Army Air Field, Laurel, Mississippi, at 1634, 21 December 1943.

I saw Army aircraft #254048 taxi out and start to take-off and the nose wheel started to collapse. Almost at the same time the nose hit the ground the engines quit. As soon as the nose hit the ground I saw the nose wheel slide out underneath the ship.


JOSEPH T. SCHAUTEN,
2nd Lt., A. C.,
671st Bomb Sqdn.

Sworn to and subscribed before me on this the 22 day
of December 1943.


ROBERT B. GEX, JR.,
Captain, A.C.,
Investigating Officer.

STATEMENT

I, Arthur J. Sanderson, ASN 16093487, was carrying some equipment to a parked airplane near the end of Runway 23, at approximately 1630, 21 December 1943.

I saw the airplane taxi out to the Runway and when he opened his throttles up the ship settled back on its tail, like these A-20Gs will do, and went about 30 feet when the whole nose gear flew out from under the airplane. The pilot had cut his throttles and the nose settled down.

Arthur J. Sanderson

ARTHUR J. SANDERSON,
Sgt., ASN 16093487,
671st Bomb Sqdn.

Sworn to and subscribed before me on this 22 day of
December 1943.

Robert B. Gex, Jr.

ROBERT B. GEX, JR.,
Captain, AC,
Investigating Officer.

H E A D Q U A R T E R S
416TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)
Office of the Technical Inspector

WHM/rcm

Army Air Field,
Laurel, Mississippi,
23 December 1943.

SUBJECT: Airplane Accident.

TO : Whom it may concern.

It is my opinion that the accident which occurred on 21 December 1943, in which a nose wheel gave away on an A-20G airplane, No 42-54048, was due to a material failure of the main support braces in the nose wheel section. I have formed this opinion only after a thorough inspection of the airplane at the scene of the accident and further inspection at the Sub-Depot, where the nose section was lifted off the ground.

William H. Moffett
WILLIAM H. MOFFETT,
CWO, USA,
Group Engineering Officer
and Ass't Tech Inspector.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR BASE

OFFICE OF THE BASE COMMANDER

LAUREL, MISSISSIPPI

Sub Base - Key Field

HWW:dc

360.33-Aircraft Accident


29 December 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-20G-10, AF 42-54048, 21 December 1943.

2. The findings of the Investigating Committee are approved.


HARRISON W. WELLMAN, JR.
Lt. Colonel, A. C.
Commanding
1677

1 Incl.
WD, AAF Form No. 14 w/9 exhibits

INCOMING MESSAGE

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES

FOR ACTION A I U

OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY

FOR INFO OFC MGMT

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR FILE M & R

DATE 22 DEC 43

T.W.X.

TELEGRAM

ADM NET

18JZ "E" JP WSAL361 V LRL387

416TH BOMB GP /L/ ARMY AIR FIELD LAUREL MISS 220207Z

COMMANDING OFFICER, FLIGHT CONTROL COMMAND,

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

LAB D 631 WV 416TH BG PERIOD CITE PART FIVE AAF REG SIXTY-TWO DASH

FOURTEEN FOLLOWING ACCIDENT REPORT IS SUBMITTED PERIOD

A. 21 DECEMBER 1634 ARMY AIR FIELD LAUREL MISSISSIPPI

B. ¹LUTHER E. HILL, ²2ND LT AUS 3RD AF 3RD BC 56TH BOMB GRNG WING /L/

416TH BOMGR 668TH BOBRON ARMY AIR FIELD /L/ LAUREL MISSISSIPPI

C. TAKE-OFF ACCIDENT - NOSE WHEEL BROKE OFF IMMEDIATELY AFTER
APPLYING THROTTLE FOR ~~TAKE-OFF~~ TAKE-OFF

D. PILOT - SCRATCH ON HEAD PERIOD GUNNER - FLOYD E BROWN SGT RA 3RD AF

3RD BC 56TH BOMB GRNG WING /L/ 416TH BOMGR 668TH BOMRON NO INJURY

E. FIXED GUNNERY MISSION

F. 8,000 FOOT CEILING SCATTERED CLOUDS AT 4000 FEET VISIBILITY UNLIMITED

G. 42-54048 A-20G-10

H. ARMY AIR FIELD LAUREL MISSISSIPPI

I. NOSE WHEEL BROKE OFF FUSELAGE WRINKLED IN FRONT OF PILOTS WINDSHIELD
BOTH PROPS BENT AND SUDDEN STOPPAGE TO BOTH ENGINES

J. UNKNOWN

K. TURNED OVER 398TH SUB DEPOT AAF LAUREL MISSISSIPPI

L. NONE

M. AFACG NOTIFIED

525
Arrived 4
Engines 44
Props 44

44-12-21-13

110

64 07 48 25

39 68 84 - 100% wheel

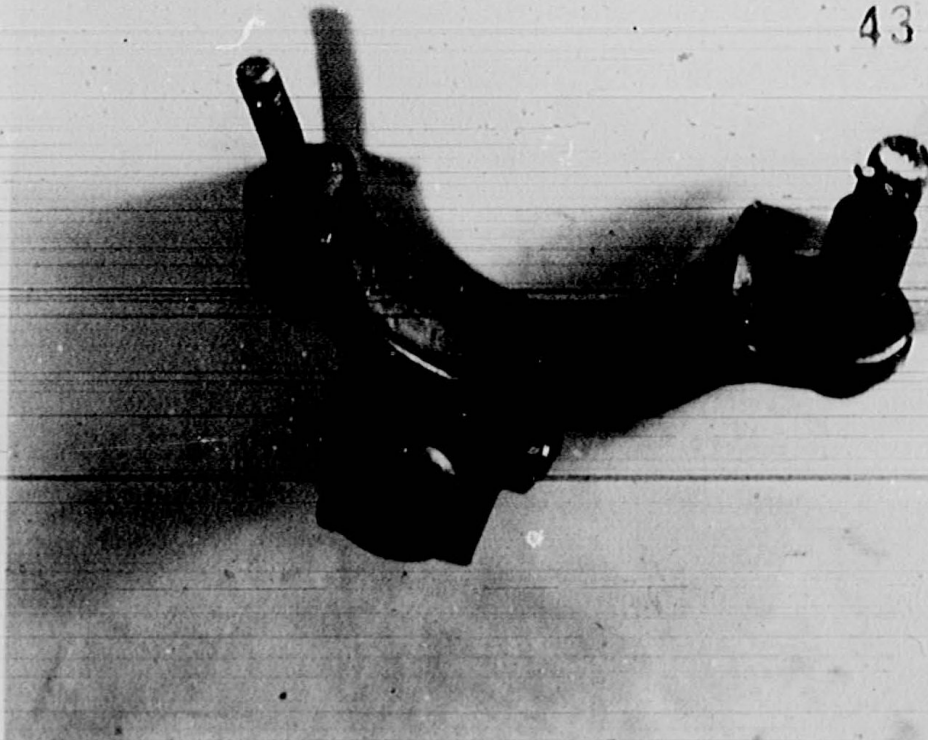
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44-12-21-13

MACE COBOMGR 416

16321 10-83

#14/220210Z/WWF/



Accident No.

44-12-21-13

Pilot's Name

Hill Luther C.

57 Nature Group

Take off

46 Specific Nature

Delayed

25 Underlying Nature

Nose wheel

100% 39 Cause Group

Aircraft

68 Specific Cause

Nose wheel

84 Underlying Cause

Undetermined

Cause Group

Specific Cause

Underlying Cause