Accident No. 15-8-30-523

Date

Checked by [illegible] 11-6-44

Analyzed by amw

Copied for Wright Field by No Copy

Notes

1225:9-43

WAR DEPARTMENT
A. A. F. Form No. 14
(Revised May 15, 1942)

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT
AF STATION 170
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

Accident No. 155

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

2 planes 45-8-30-523

D1-020

Guyhirm

(1) Place Thorny Toll, 4½ miles south of (2) Date 30 August 1944 (3) Time 1810

Aircraft: (4) Type and model A-20J-5 (5) A. F. No. 43-9450 (6) Station AAF Station 170

Organization: (7) IX BC-Ninth AF (8) 416 Bomb (L) (9) 669 Bomb (L)
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

Z393

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)
P	Smith, John D.	Pilot	O-759516	2nd Lt.	18 01	AC	Ninth AF	Fatal 4	None

acc #1

(20) Smith (Last name) John (First name) D (Middle initial) (21) O-759516 (Serial number) (22) 2nd Lt. (Rank) (23) 18 (Personnel class) (24) AC (Branch)

Assigned (25) IX BC-Ninth AF (Command and Air Force) (26) 416 Bomb (L) (Group) (27) 669 Bomb (L) (Squadron) (28) AAF Station 170 (Station)

Z393

Attached for flying (29) ... (Command and Air Force) (30) ... (Group) (31) ... (Squadron) (32) ... (Station)

Original rating (33) Pilot (Rating) (34) 11/3/43 (Date) Present rating (35) pilot (Rating) (36) 11/3/43 (Date) Instrument rating (37) 5/12/44 (Date)

First Pilot Hours:
(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type	A-20 160:25	(42) Instrument time last 6 months	—
(39) This model	A-20J 63:25	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	—
(40) Last 90 days	41:40	(44) Night time last 6 months	—
(41) Total	558:45	(45) Night time last 30 days	—

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

F Omw 11-6

	DAMAGE					(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft	W-S					Complete destruction.
(47) Engine(s)	W-S	W-S				
(48) Propeller(s)	W-S	W-S				

(50) Weather at the time of accident 4 - 6/10 clouds at 2,500 feet. 10 - 15 miles visibility

EK

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No

(52) Cleared from AAF Station 170 (53) To AAF Station 170 (54) Kind of clearance Local O

Z393 Z393

(55) Pilot's mission Local navigation formation FS

(56) Nature of accident Mid-air collision. Collision in full flight with other aircraft. 01

(57) Cause of accident Pilot error. Error in judgement.

(58) Has the form 54 been submitted? No 12

RESTRICTED

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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

NARRATIVE:

At 1615, 30 August 1944, 1st Lt. Edward L. Miller took off in A-20G-40 ASN 43-21483, followed by 2nd Lt. John D. Smith in A-20J-5, ASN 43-9450, on a two-plane formation-navigation training mission.

After about an hour and fifty-five minutes of flying, the formation was approaching Thorny Toll, Cambridgeshire, flying in a south-easterly direction toward home base. At about 2,000 feet altitude at this time Lt. Smith, who was flying on the right wing of Lt. Miller, decided to cross under to the left side of Lt. Miller's airplane. He dropped down a little and started to cross underneath the lead airplane. During this maneuver, Lt. Smith either misjudged his distance, or got caught in the slipstream of Lt. Miller's airplane and collided with him, cutting off the tail of Lt. Miller's aircraft at the rear turret.

Lt. Miller's aircraft went out of control, so he immediately jettisoned his escape hatch and successfully abandoned the aircraft.

Lt. Smith's aircraft also went out of control and spun in on the Peterboro-Wisbech highway at Thorny Toll, causing damage to two buildings, telephone wires along the highway, and completely wrecking the aircraft, which, according to witnesses, had burst into flame before striking the ground. Lt. Miller's aircraft fell in an open field about 500 yards to the northeast of the road intersection at Thorny Toll and burst into flame upon impact with the ground.

Lt. Smith did not abandon his aircraft and was killed, while Lt. Miller parachuted down successfully. No civilian personnel were injured.

An accurate reconstruction of exactly what occurred in the mid-air collision cannot be made due to the lack of reliable witnesses to the collision and because of the thorough destruction of the aircraft by fire following the crash. This much, however, seems to be evident: That the tail section of Lt. Miller's aircraft was cut off at the rear turret, apparently by the left propeller of Lt. Smith's aircraft. This opinion is formed from the condition of the turret from Lt. Miller's aircraft, which showed evidence of damage which could only have been inflicted by a revolving propeller.

No evidence of sabotage, mechanical or structural failure, or violations of existing flying regulations could be found.

RESPONSIBILITY:

An error in judgement on the part of Lt. Smith in attempting to pass too close to another aircraft in flight, or failure to observe the danger of the effect of the slipstream of another aircraft.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

None.

APPROVED: Theodore R. Aylesworth

THEODORE R. AYLESWORTH,
Lt.Col., Air Corps,
Commanding.

Signature: William J. Meng

(Investigating Officer)

WILLIAM J. MENG, Major, A.C.

Robert A. Clark

ROBERT A. CLARK, Major, A.C.

Kenneth T. Roney

KENNETH T. RONEY, Major, A.C.

Richard F. Shaefer

RICHARD F. SHAEFER, Capt., A.C.

Date 5 September 1944

Hq 505 5-43/10M/9093

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT
A. A. F. Form No. 14
(Revised May 15, 1942)

~~RESTRICTED~~

WAR DEPARTMENT
AAF Station 170
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

ACCIDENT NO. .....

2 planes
43-8-30-523

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

01-001

Guyhirm

(1) Place Thorny Toll, 4½ miles south of/ (2) Date 30 August 1944 (3) Time 1810

AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model A-20G-40 (5) A. F. No. 43-21483 (6) Station AAF Station 170

Organization: (7) IX BC-Ninth AF (8) 416 Bomb (L) (9) 669 Bomb (L)
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

Z393

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)
P	Miller, Edward L.	Pilot	0-664638	1st Lt.	01	AC	Ninth AF	None	S

acc #2

(20) Miller (Last name) Edward (First name) L. (Middle initial) 0-664638 (Serial number) (22) 1st Lt. (Rank) (23) 01 (Personnel class) (24) AC (Branch)

Assigned (25) IX BC-Ninth AF (Command and Air Force) 416 Bomb (L) (Group) 669 Bomb (L) (Squadron) (26) AAF Station 170 (Station)

Attached for flying (29) — (Command and Air Force) (30) — (Group) (31) — (Squadron) (32) — (Station)

Z393

Original rating (33) Pilot (Rating) (34) 9/6/42 (Date) Present rating (35) Pilot (Rating) (36) 9/6/42 (Date) Instrument rating (37) 10/4/43 (Date)

K

FIRST PILOT HOURS:
(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type	A-20 156:40	(42) Instrument time last 6 months	—
(39) This model	A-20G 44:35	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	—
(40) Last 90 days	68:25	(44) Night time last 6 months	—
(41) Total	1489:15	(45) Night time last 30 days	—

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

	DAMAGE				(46) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft	W				Complete destruction.
(47) Engine(s)	W	W			
(48) Propeller(s)	W	W			

(50) Weather at the time of accident 4 - 6/10 clouds at 2,500 feet. 10 - 15 miles visibility.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No.

(52) Cleared from AAF Station 170 (53) To AAF Station 170 (54) Kind of clearance Local

Z393 Z393

(55) Pilot's mission Local navigation formation.

(56) Nature of accident Mid-air collision. Collision in full flight with other aircraft.

(57) Cause of accident Pilot Error. Error of judgement. (See Responsibility)

(58) Has the form 54 been submitted? No.

~~RESTRICTED~~

RESTRICTED

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

NARRATIVE:

At 1615, 30 August 1944, 1st Lt. Edward L. Miller took off in A-20G-40 ASN 43-21483, followed by 2nd Lt. John D. Smith in A-20J-5, ASN 43-9450, on a two-plane formation-navigation training mission.

After about an hour and fifty-five minutes of flying, the formation was approaching Thorny Toll, Cambridgeshire, flying in a south-easterly direction toward home base. At about 2,000 feet altitude at this time Lt. Smith, who was flying on the right wing of Lt. Miller, decided to cross under to the left side of Lt. Miller's airplane. He dropped down a little and started to cross underneath the lead airplane. During this maneuver, Lt. Smith either misjudged his distance, or got caught in the slipstream of Lt. Miller's airplane and collided with him, cutting off the tail of Lt. Miller's aircraft at the rear turret.

Lt. Miller's aircraft went out of control, so he immediately jettisoned his escape hatch and successfully abandoned the aircraft.

Lt. Smith's aircraft also went out of control and spun in on the Peterboro-Wisbech highway at Thorny Toll, causing damage to two buildings, telephone wires along the highway, and completely wrecking the aircraft, which, according to witnesses, had burst into flame before striking the ground. Lt. Miller's aircraft fell in an open field about 500 yards to the northeast of the road intersection at Thorny Toll and burst into flame upon impact with the ground.

Lt. Smith did not abandon his aircraft and was killed, while Lt. Miller parachuted down successfully. No civilian personnel were injured.

An accurate reconstruction of exactly what occurred in the mid-air collision cannot be made due to the lack of reliable witnesses to the collision and because of the thorough destruction of the aircraft by fire following the crash. This much, however, seems to be evident: That the tail section of Lt. Miller's aircraft was cut off at the rear turret, apparently by the left propeller of Lt. Smith's aircraft. This opinion is formed from the condition of the turret from Lt. Miller's aircraft, which showed evidence of damage which could only have been inflicted by a revolving propeller.

No evidence of sabotage, mechanical or structural failure, or violations of existing flying regulations could be found.

RESPONSIBILITY:

An error in judgement on the part of Lt. Smith in attempting to pass too close to another aircraft in flight, or failure to observe the danger of the effect of the slipstream of another aircraft.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

None.

APPROVED: Theodore R. Aylesworth (Signature)

THEODORE R. AYLESWORTH,
Lt.Col., Air Corps,
Commanding.

William J. Meng (Operations Officer)
WILLIAM J. MENG, Major, A.C.
Robert A. Clark
ROBERT A. CLARK, Major, A.C.
Kenneth T. Roney
Kenneth T. Roney, Major, A.C.
Richard F. Shaefer
RICHARD F. SHAEFER, Capt., A.C.

Date 5 September 1944

Hq 505 5-43/10M/9093

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STATEMENT

31 August 1944.

I, Edward L. Miller, 1st Lt., Air Corps, Serial Number 0-664638, 669th Bomb Squadron (L), 416th Bomb Group (L), Pilot in ap A-20G-40, 43-21483, state the following:

Lt. JOHN D. SMITH, Pilot of ap A-20J-5, 43-9450, and I were on a routine training, navigation-formation flight, in route at 2000' from Spolding to Cambridge, on the last leg of the flight. Lt. SMITH was flying the approved position on my right wing when I last saw him. I was under the impression that he was preparing to change position to my left wing.

I have no idea what happened; my ship was struck and almost immediately began to spin out of control. I jettisoned the top hatch and abandoned the ship. Lt. SMITH failed to get clear of his ship.

When I last saw Lt. SMITH's plane it was in a flat spin to the right, apparently intact. His plane crashed in a road near a house.

Upon contact with Lt. SMITH's plane, my plane broke at the turret, with the forward section crashing in a field and the remainder crashing in an adjacent field.

No civilian personnel were injured. Lt. SMITH was killed. Accident occurred at 1810, 30 August 1944.

Edward L Miller
EDWARD L. MILLER,
1st Lt, Air Corps,
Pilot.

RESTRICTED

Incl 3.

RESTRICTED

S-T-A-T-E-M-E-N-T 31 August 1944

I was standing in the garden in front of my home on the Peterboro-Wisbech Road in Thorny-Toll, Cambridgeshire County, at about 1730 o'clock on Wednesday, 30 August 1944, when suddenly I heard a loud crash. Looking up, I saw an aircraft coming straight down toward me and pieces of the aircraft were falling behind it. It was spinning around and burning and appeared to be coming apart. I made a dash for the nearby bridge for safety and the airplane crashed in my front yard, enveloping my house in flames. This was the only aircraft I saw as everything occurred in a split second and I immediately ran upon seeing the danger.

/s/ Mrs. Violet Calton
/t/MRS. VILOT CALTON
Thorny-Toll, Cambridgeshire

I CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A TRUE COPY:

Kenneth T. Roney

KENNETH T. RONEY,
Major, Air Corps.

Incl. 2.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

S-T-A-T-E-M-E-N-T 31 August 1944

I was standing in the garden on my brother's property located on the Peterboro-Wisbech road about 500 yards west of the road intersection at Thorny-Toll, when I saw two aircraft approaching from the west flying very close together. They were flying at a reasonably high altitude and one airplane was a little behind and to the side of the other. I can't remember whether the one behind was to the right or to the left of the one ahead. It then appeared as though the one behind dropped down a little and went underneath the one in front; it then rose slightly and collided with the one above, which was still slightly ahead. Pieces started falling from the two aircraft and shortly after I saw a parachute open and the airplanes separate from each other a little bit. By this time they were getting so close that I became alarmed and turned and ran out into the field. I saw no more until after the airplanes had crashed, one on the highway intersection at Thorny-Toll and the other in a field about 500 yards to the north of the Peterboro highway. Both aircraft were burning when I saw them again.

/s/ Mrs. Edith Jackson
/t/ MRS. EDITH JACKSON
Thorny-Toll

I CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A TRUE COPY:

Kenneth T. Roney

KENNETH T. RONEY,
Major, Air Corps,

Incl. 3.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

31 August 1944

STATEMENT

A-20J-5 Airplane, AAF Serial Number 43-9450, was in the best possible mechanical condition prior to its crash on 30 August 1944. On the pre-flight inspection, the morning of 30 August 1944, the airplane was found to be functioning properly, and was ready for any mission. There were no inspections due on the airplane.

The airplane flew one (1) mission prior to its crash, and was reported "O. K." by the pilot.

John T. Andrews

JOHN T. ANDREWS,
1st Lieut., Air Corps,
Ass't. Engineering Officer.

RESTRICTED

Incl 34

RESTRICTED

31 August 1944

STATEMENT

There were no defects noted on the pre-flight and daily inspection of A-20G-40 Airplane, AAF Serial Number 43-21483, the morning of August 30, 1944. Subject Airplane had no inspections due, and was in the best possible mechanical condition prior to its crash 30 August 1944.

The Airplane flew two (2) missions prior to its crash and was reported "O.K." by the pilot on both missions.

John T. Andrews

JOHN T. ANDREWS,
1st Lieut., Air Corps,
Ass't. Engineering Officer.

RESTRICTED

Incl. 5.

RESTRICTED

31 August 1944

S T A T E M E N T

There were no defects noted on pre-flight inspection of A-20G-40 Airplane, AAF Serial Number 43-21483, on the morning of 30 August 1944. Both engines were operating normally, and all instruments were found to be operating satisfactorily.

A daily inspection was performed immediately after the pre-flight inspection, and everything was found satisfactory. The accessory section of both engines, as well as the airplane in general, were given a complete visual inspection, and nothing out of the ordinary was noted.

After completion of the daily inspection, the airplane was considered fit for any mission.

William H. Dyk

WILLIAM H. DYK,
T/Sgt., Air Corps,
Crew Chief.

RESTRICTED

Jack Bb.

RESTRICTED

31 August 1944

S T A T E M E N T

On the preflight inspection of A-20J-5 Airplane, A.A.F. Serial Number 43-9450, the morning of 30 August 1944, no defects were found. Both engines were operating normally, and all engine and flight instruments were found to be operating satisfactorily. Both engine magnetos were not losing any noticeable R.P.M.

A Daily inspection was performed immediately after the preflight inspection. Both engines and accessory sections were given a complete and thorough visual inspection and nothing out of the ordinary was noted. The complete airplane was also given a thorough visual inspection, and everything was considered satisfactory.

After these inspections were completed, the airplane was considered satisfactory for any mission.

On the first flight of the day, the airplane was reported "O.K." by the pilot.

William A. Springer
WILLIAM A. SPRINGER,
Sgt., Air Corps,
Crew Chief.

RESTRICTED

Incl. 3b

669th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)
Office of the Operations Officer

APO 140, U.S.Army
30 August 1944

OPERATIONS ORDER)
:
NUMBER 159)

Pursuant to Authority contained in AR-95-15, dated 21 April 1930, the following training flights with personnel as indicated will be conducted this date:

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

					Formation-
PILOT	SMITH, John D. 2nd Lt.	AIRPLANE	A-20J-5 43-9450	MISSION	Navigation
CO-PILOT	----------	TAKE-OFF	1615	LAND	1845
CREW	----------	BOMB LOAD	None	AMMUNITION	Maximum
		ROUTE	Local		
		FUEL	725 gal.	ALTITUDE	2000'

					Formation-
PILOT	MILLER, Edward L. 1st Lt	AIRPLANE	A-20G-40 43-2148	MISSION	Navigation
CO-PILOT	-------	TAKE-OFF	1615	LAND	1845
CREW	----------	BOMB LOAD	None	AMMUNITION	Maximum
		ROUTE	Local		
		FUEL	725 gal.	ALTITUDE	2000'

By order fo Major NAPIER:

HAROLD L. SOMMERS,
Capt., Air Corps,
Operations Officer.

OFFICIAL:

/s/ Harold L.Sommers
/t/ HAROLD L. SOMMERS,
Capt., Air Corps,
Operations Officer

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

Robert L. Burton

ROBERT L. BURTON,
1st. Lt., Air Corps,
A'sst Opns. Officer.

Jack 28.

43-21483



43-21483



43-21483



43-21483



43-21483



43-21483



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43-21483



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43-21483



43-21483



43-21483



43-21483



43-21483



43-21483



43-21483



RUDDER + FIN 43-21483

LOOSE ATTACHED LOOSE



(GAD-24-12-41K) (30-AUG-44) (A-20 CRASH)

43-21483



43-9450



(GAD-28-9-41K) (30-AUG-44) (A-20 CRASH)

43-9450



(GNU-23-6-41K) (30-AUG-44) (A-20 CRASH)

RUDDER + FIN 43-21483

LOOSE ATTACHED LOOSE



(GAD-24-12-41K) (30-AUG-41) (A-20 CRASH)

43-21483



43-9450



(GAD-28-9-41K) (30-AUG-41) (A-20 CRASH)

43-9450



(GHU-23-6-41K) (30-AUG-41) (A-20 CRASH)

RUDDER + FIN 43-21483

LOOSE ATTACHED LOOSE



(GAD-24-12-41L) (30-AUG-41) (A-20 CRASH)

43-21483



43-9450



(GAD-28-9-41L) (30-AUG-41) (A-20 CRASH)

43-9450



(GNU-23-6-41L) (30-AUG-41) (A-20 CRASH)

RUDDER + FIN 43-21483

LODGE ATTACHED LOOSE



(GAD-24-12-41K) (30-AUG-44) (A-20 CRASH)

43-21483



43-9450



(GAD-28-8-41K) (30-AUG-44) (A-20 CRASH)

43-9450



(GNU-23-6-41K) (30-AUG-44) (A-20 CRASH)

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

APO 140, U. S. Army,
11 October 1944.

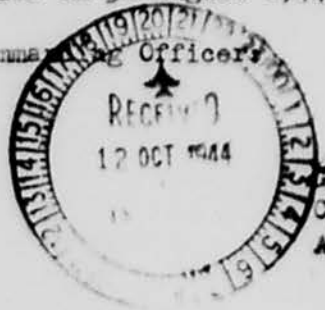
SUBJECT: Transmittal of AAF Form 14.

TO : Commanding General, 9th Bombardment Division (M), APO 140, U. S. Army.

Transmitted herewith is the AAF Form 14 and inclosures (in quadruplicate) for the accident of A-20J-5 aircraft number 43-9450 piloted by 2nd Lt. John D. Smith and A-20G-40 aircraft number 43-21483 piloted by 1st Lt. Edward L. Miller on 30 August 1944.

F

For the Commanding Officer:



GEORGE SCHENAEIN,
Captain, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

Inclosures: 3
AAF Form 14 (in quadruplicate) on 43-9450.
AAF Form 14 (in quadruplicate) on 43-21483.
Inclosures to Form 14's:
Statement of Witness
Statement of Witness
Statement of Engineering Officer
Statement of Engineering Officer
Statement of Crew Chief
Statement of Crew Chief
Extract of Operations Order
Photographs
Photographs

360.33 1st Ind. E-J-2
HEADQUARTERS 9TH BOMBARDMENT DIVISION (M), APO 140, U. S. ARMY, 16 October 1944.

TO: Commanding General, Ninth Air Force, APO 696, U. S. Army.

Submitted in compliance with Memorandum 55-1, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, dated 22 March 1944.

For the Commanding General:



RICHARD U. SANDERS,
Brig. Gen., U.S.A.,
Chief of Staff.

3 Incls: n/c (1 cy ea w/d)

360.33 2nd Ind. E-RFS-3
HEADQUARTERS NINTH AIR FORCE, APO 696, US Army. 23 OCT 1944

TO: Chief, Flying Safety, Army Air Forces, Winston-Salem 1, North Carolina.

Report of Aircraft Accident Committee approved.

For the Commanding General:

C.M. SEEBACH,
Colonel, AGD,
Adjutant General.

3 Incls: n/c (2 cys ea w/d)

9 C 32