Accident No. 45-10-17-538

Date

Checked by [illegible] 12 3 45

Analyzed by

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Notes AH Capt Bache

3 May 45

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

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES
STATION A-55

ACCIDENT No. 43-10-19-528

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place AAF Station A-55 (2) Date 19 October 1944 (3) Time 1722

AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model A-26B-15 (5) A. F. No. 41-39145 (6) Station AAF Station A-55

Organization: (7) 9th B.D. Ninth A.F. (Command and Air Force) (8) 416th Bomb (L) (Group) (9) 669th Bomb (L) (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)
P	William H. Ames	Pilot	0-753586	1st Lt.	18	AC	Ninth AF	None	None
G	Herman S. Fessler	Gunner	37559819	S/Sgt	38	AC	Ninth AF	None	None
G	Robert J. Brown	Gunner	15102500	S/Sgt	38	AC	Ninth AF	None	None

PERSONNEL CHANGES AFTER ACCIDENT

(20) Ames (Last name) William (First name) H. (Middle initial) (21) 0-753586 (Serial number) (22) 1st Lt. (Rank) (23) 18 (Personnel class) (24) AC (Branch)

Assigned (25) 9th B.D., Ninth AF (Command and Air Force) (26) 416 Bomb (L) (Group) (27) 671 Bomb (L) (Squadron) (28) AAF Station A-55 (Station)

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

Original rating (33) Pilot (Rating) (34) 8-30-43 (Date) Present rating (35) Pilot (Rating) (36) 8-30-43 (Date) Instrument rating (37) 3-28-44 (Date)

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

(38) This type A-26	5:30	(42) Instrument time last 6 months	--
(39) This model A-26B	5:30	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	--
(40) Last 90 days	90:30	(44) Night time last 6 months	--
(41) Total	691:10	(45) Night time last 30 days	--

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE					(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft	0				Nose wheel assembly- Nose section
(47) Engine(s)	0	0			Sudden stoppage to both engines
(48) Propeller(s)	0	0			Both propellers bent

(50) Weather at the time of accident Visibility 5 miles. 4/10 clouds at 3000 feet.

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

(52) Cleared from AAF Station A-55 (53) To AAF Station A-55 (54) Kind of clearance Contact

(55) Pilot's mission Local Transition

(56) Nature of accident Landing accident

(57) Cause of accident Nose wheel collapsed on landing

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

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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

NARRATIVE:

Completing a transition flight in aircraft A-26B-15, No. 41-39145, Lt. Ames lowered his landing gear in preparation for landing. The gear indicator indicated all three gears down; the red light went out and the green lights came on. Consequently, Lt. Ames landed on the assumption that his landing gear was down and locked. He held the nose gear off the ground after making a normal landing. However, upon lowering the nose, the nose gear collapsed. The aircraft then slid on its nose for approximately 200 yards, and came to a stop on the runway. Both propellers were damaged, and the nose wheel doors were buckled.

Investigation disclosed that the micro-switch box for the landing gear indicator light was rigidly mounted. Consequently, the position could not be adjusted properly in the elongated slots which were designed for that purpose. Therefore, the nose gear light indicated down and locked when the gear was only partially extended. The nose gear was not locked in the down position when the airplane landed. This nose gear had been repaired while this aircraft was attached to a previous group. Faulty repair work resulted in maladjustment of the retracting link, plus elimination of the bearing spacer in the assembly of the retracting mechanism. Consequently, there was too much play between the nose wheel down latch and the lower nose wheel retracting link assembly. Thus, the nose gear was not locked in the down position, and it collapsed when the nose was lowered. Faulty maintenance, rather than malfunction of mechanism was the cause of the collapse.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Faulty maintenance and installation.

RECOMMENDATION:

More careful supervision of installation, adjustment and maintenance of equipment is necessary. This is especially true when crews are working with new or unfamiliar equipment. The adjustment of the down latch assembly of the A-26 nose gear is very important, and should be emphasized to all crews.

INCLOSURES:

Incl. #1 - Statement of Pilot.
Incl. #2 - Statement of Gunner.
Incl. #3 - Statement of Gunner.
Incl. #4 - Statement of Crew Chief.
Incl. #5 - Statement of Engineering Officer
Incl. #6 - Photographs.

APPROVED:

Theodore R. Ayleworth

THEODORE R. AYLESWORTH,
Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding.

Signature Richard F. Shaefer (Investigating Officer)

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RICHARD F. SHAEFER,
Captain, Air Corps,
Investigating Officer.

Date 27 November 1944

Mq SOS USAPP/6-43/5M/10404

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671ST BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

A.P.O. # 140, U.S. Army,
19 October 1944.

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident.

TO : Operations Officer, 416th Bombardment Group (L), APO #140, U.S. Army.

S T A T E M E N T

On the afternoon of 19 October 1944 I was flying transition in A-26 aircraft #41-39145, out of station # A-55. At 1715 hours I came over the field in direction of landing, called the control tower, and entered the pattern in the down-wind leg. Slowing the airplane down to 160 M.P.H., the gear was lowered at beginning of base leg. I observed the main gear go down and lock, checked the instrument panel for green light and "down" indication on selsyn indicator. Both indicated a safe condition for the landing gear. I checked the hydraulic pressure which immediately returned to a normal operating pressure as the gear locked.

The airplane was landed smoothly on the main gear, holding the nose wheel off for a short period. As the nose wheel was allowed to touch the runway it capsized and the ship skidded about three hundred (300) yards on the nose. Ignition, battery disconnect, and generator switches were cut during this period of skidding, and I pulled the mixture to idle cut-off position. It was possible to maintain some directional control through full application of rudder and right brake to prevent the airplane from leaving the runway and plowing into soft mud shoulders. I had the engineer gunner jettison the canopy just prior to stopping and abandon ship immediately. The rear armorer gunner did likewise and left ship immediately upon coming to a halt. I placed both gas selector valves in "off" position to stop flow of gas from rupture in the left side of the ship.

There were no injuries of any form experienced by any of the three crew members, Lt. William H. Ames, S/Sgt. Robert J. Brown and S/Sgt. Herman S. Fessler.

William H. Ames
WILLIAM H. AMES,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
671st Bomb Sq (L).

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RESTRICTED

Incl. 2

671st BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

A.P.O. # 140, U.S. Army.
20 October 1944.

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident.

TO : Operations Officer, 416th Bombardment Group (L), APO #140, U.S. Army.

S T A T E M E N T

On the afternoon of 19 October 1944, we were flying transition in A-26 41-39145, out of station A-55. At 1715 hours we came over the field and Lt. Ames called the tower and entered the pattern. He slowed the airplane down to 160 M.P.H. and lowered the landing gear on the base leg. As I was in the front cockpit with Lt. Ames I was able to observe that the main gear went down and locked and also that the selsyn indicator and green lights were in the safe position. The hydraulic pressure returned to normal and the warning horn did not blow at any time.

We made a normal landing on the main gear, but when the nose wheel came down it collapsed and allowed the airplane to skid on its nose, for about three hundred (300) yards. Lt. Ames cut all switches, throttles and mixture controls as soon as possible after the nose hit and proceeded to keep the airplane on an even keel by the use of his rudder and brakes. He then told me to jettison the hatch, which I did. We got out of the airplane as soon as possible after the airplane stopped sliding. The armorer gunner jettisoned his hatch and did likewise. None of the crew were hurt.

Robert J. Brown

ROBERT J. BROWN, 15102500,
S/Sgt., Engineer Gunner.
671st Bomb Squadron (L).

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Incl. 2.

671st BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

A.P.O. # 140, U.S. Army.
19 October 1944.

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident.

TO : Operations Officer, 416th Bombardment Group (L), APO #140, U.S. Army.

S T A T E M E N T

The undersigned was the armorer gunner in A-26B 41-39145 on 19 October 1944, in which the nose gear collasped.

I was operating lower sight as we came into the final approach. When the flaps went down I locked the sight to the rear in Azumith and Elevation, also the seat. I noticed the landing which was smooth and even. The plane rolled down the runway and my attention was averted to the inside of the gunners compartment. Then I felt a heavy jar and realized that the nose gear had collasped. I immediately stood up in my seat and opened the escape hatch. I held it open with one hand while waiting for the ship to slow down enough for me to get out without injuring myself. As I was leaving the plane through the escape hatch I observed S/Sgt. Brown jettison the hatch in pilots compartment and both pilot and engineer left the plane immediately. I slid down the wing and joined them on the runway.

There were no injuries received by the crew, 1st Lt., W.H. Ames, S/Sgt. R.J. Brown and S/Sgt. H.S. Fessler.

Herman S. Fessler
HERMAN S. FESSLER, 37559819.
S/Sgt., Armorer Gunner.
671st Bomb Squadron (L).

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Incl. #4

671st BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)

APO #140, U.S. Army,
20 October 1944.

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident.

TO : Operations Officer, 416th Bombardment Group (L), APO # 140, U.S. Army.

S T A T E M E N T

To the best of my knowledge A-26 airplane #41-39145 was in good condition for flight and was given all routine inspections before flight.

JOSEPH CICCALONE, 31334015
Pfc., 668th Bomb Sq (L).

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Incl. 4

484TH AIR SERVICE SQUADRON
TEAM "A"
4TH SERVICE GROUP

U-C/hvd

APO 149, U.S. Army,
26 November 1944.

S T A T E M E N T

On 19 October 1944, Aircraft A-26B-15, A.A.F. No. 41-39145 crash-landed on Airstrip A-55. The following was noted on inspection:

Spacer, OD Bearing, Part No. 1026614G10-0120 was left out in the assembly of the nose wheel retracting mechanism; thus allowing too much play between the nose wheel down latch and the lower nose wheel retracting link assembly.

Adjustment on retracting link was approximately two turns out of adjustment.

The nose wheel switch was secured permanently to upper retracting link assembly.

James L. Curtis
JAMES L. CURTIS,
Captain, Air Corps,
Engineering Officer.

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Jack #6




GAD-30-3-416-19-OCT-44- A-26-CRRASH






GAD-30-3-416-19-OCT-44- A-26-CRRASH






GAD-30-3-416-19-OCT-44- A-26-CRRASH









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HEADQUARTERS E-CSJ-3
[illegible] DIVISION (M)

360.33

APO 140, U. S. Army
5 December 1944

SUBJECT: Transmittal of AAF Form 14.

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

Transmitted herewith for file is AAF Form 14 and allied papers on aircraft accident of 1st Lt. William H. Ames in aircraft number 41-39145, A-26B-15, 19 October 1944.

For the Commanding General:

360.33

M. S. WORTH,
1st LT AIR CORPS,
ASST ADJ. GENERAL.

7 Incls:
Incl #1 - AAF Form 14 (in trip).
Incl #2 - Statement of 1st Lt. William H. Ames (in trip).
Incl #3 - Statement of S/Sgt. Robert J. Brown (in trip).
Incl #4 - Statement of S/Sgt. Herman B. Fessler (in trip).
Incl #5 - Statement of Pvt. Joseph Cicalone (in trip).
Incl #6 - Statement of Capt. James I. Curtis (in trip).
Incl #7 - Photographs (in trip).

10 DEC 1944

360.33 1st Ind. E-CSJ-3
HEADQUARTERS NINTH AIR FORCE, APO 696, US Army. 14 DEC 1944

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

Report and recommendation of Aircraft Accident Officer approved.

For the Commanding General:

S.V. HESLIN,
Major, A.G.D.,
Asst Adj. Gen.

7 Incls: (2 cys ea w/d)

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HEADQUARTERS
[illegible] DIVISION (M)

E-J-2

360.33

APO 140, U. S. Army
5 December 1944

SUBJECT: Transmittal of AAF Form 14.

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

Transmitted herewith in lieu of AAF Form 14 and allied papers on aircraft accident of 1st Lt. William H. Ames in aircraft number 41-39145, A-26B-15, 19 October 1944.

For the Commanding General:

360.33

M. S. WORTH,
1st LT AIR CORPS,
ASST ADJ. GENERAL.

7 Incls:
Incl #1 - AAF Form 14 (in trip).
Incl #2 - Statement of 1st Lt. William H. Ames (in trip).
Incl #3 - Statement of S/Sgt. Robert J. Brown (in trip).
Incl #4 - Statement of S/Sgt. Herman S. Fessler (in trip).
Incl #5 - Statement of Pfc. Joseph Ciccalone (in trip).
Incl #6 - Statement of Capt. James L. Curtis (in trip).
Incl #7 - Photographs (in trip).

10 DEC 1944

360.33 1st Ind. E-CSJ-3
HEADQUARTERS NINTH AIR FORCE, APO 696, US Army. 14 DEC 1944

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

Report and recommendation of Aircraft Accident Officer approved.

For the Commanding General:

S.V. HESLIN,
Major, A.G.D.,
Asst Adj. Gen.

7 Incls: (2 cys ea w/d)

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