

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

Nebr.)

(1) Place Milligan (2 miles north of Milligan, (2) Date Oct. 25, 1943 (3) Time 2105 Z
 (4) Type and model B-24-H (5) A. F. No. 42-7657 (6) Station Fairmont AAF
 Organization (7) 2nd AF (8) 451st (9) 721th

PERSONNEL

(10)	NAME (Last name first)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)
P	Brown, Charles L.	P	0-745043	2nd Lt.	18	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None	
CP	Frye, Clyde H.	CP	0-811061	2nd Lt.	18	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None	
B	Augelli, Archille P.	B	T-122420	Flight O.	18	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None	
E	Wilson, William C.	E	35637403	Sgt	18	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None	
AE	Mogavero, Albert R.	E	32299502	Sgt	18	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None	
RO	Bivona, Andrew G.	RO	12191040	Pfc	20	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None	
AE	Doris, Arthur O.	E	31138609	Sgt	18	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None	
AG	Hubbell, Eugene A.	AG	36566137	Sgt	18	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None	

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) Brown, Charles L. (21) 0-745043 (22) 2nd Lt. (23) 18 (24) AAF
 Assigned (25) 2nd AF (26) 451st (27) 721th (28) Fairmont AAF
 Attached for flying (29) 2nd AF (30) 451st (31) 721th (32) Fairmont AAF
 Original rating (33) P (34) May 20, 1943 (35) P (36) May 20, 1943 (37) 6/30/43

First Pilot Hours:

(38) This type	(39) This model	(40) Last 90 days	(41) Total	(42) Instrument time last 6 months	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	(44) Night time last 6 months	(45) Night time last 30 days
76:25	7:45	72:15	83:30	11	23:05	32:25	34:5

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

(46) Aircraft	(47) Engines	(48) Propeller(s)	(49) Description of Damaged Parts
W	W	W	Aircraft complete wreck
W	W	W	Engines complete wreck
W	W	W	Propallors complete wreck

(50) Weather at time of accident: High overcast 8/10 top of overcast 12,000 ft. Visibility good through breaks in clouds

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident: No
 (52) Cleared from Fairmont AAF (53) To Fairmont AAF (54) Kind of clearance: Local
 (55) Pilot's mission: Formation Training Flight

RESTRICTED

(56) Nature of accident: Aircraft collision
 (57) Cause of accident: Accident occurred when pilot flying in a low ship formation flew his ship into another ship.

RESTRICTED

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

(1) Place Milligan (2 miles north of Milligan, Nebr. (2) Date October 25, 1942 (3) Time 2105 Z
Aircraft (4) Type and model B-24-H (5) A. F. No. 42-7673 (6) Station Fairmont Army Air Fld
Organization (7) 2nd Air Force (8) 451st (9) 721st

PERSONNEL

JOBT	NAME (Last name first)	STATUS	SERIAL NO.	RANK	PERSONNEL CLASS	BRANCH	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND	RESULT TO PERSONNEL	TYPE OF PARACHUTE
(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
P	Williams, James Harold	P	0-663216	2nd Lt.	01	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None
CP	Klein, Kelvin	P	0-750618	2nd Lt.	01	AAF	2nd AF	Missing	S
N	Harzog, William E.	N	0-620655	2nd Lt.	18	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None
B	Orway, Kenneth S.	B	0-688677	2nd Lt.	18	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None
E	Bobbitt, James H.	E	35567236	Sgt	38	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None
AE	Watkins, William D.	E	34516962	Sgt	38	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None
AE	Williams, William G.	E	16146926	Sgt	21	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None
RO	Chamberlin, Wilbur H.	RO	31120763	Sgt	38	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None
AG	Boucher, Edward O.	AG	20644451	Sgt	21	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None
AG	Galindo, Olsolo Jr.	AG	39279124	Sgt	38	AAF	2nd AF	Fatal	None

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) Williams, James H. (21) 0-663216 (22) 2nd Lt. (23) 01 (24) AAF
(Last name) (First name) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned (25) 2nd Air Force (26) 451st (27) 721st (28) Fairmont Army Air Fld
(Command and Air Force) (Wing) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) 2nd Air Force (30) 451st (31) 721st (32) Fairmont Army Air Fld
(Command and Air Force) (Wing) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) P (34) 8-5-42 (35) P (36) 8-5-42 (37) Oct. 30, 1942.
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

FIRST PILOT NOTES:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type 42:45 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 17:35
(39) This model 6:45 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 7:15
(40) Last 90 days 46:40 (44) Night time last 6 months 14:20
(41) Total 548:45 (45) Night time last 30 days 10:45

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	DO LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS			
(46) Aircraft	W	W	W	W
(47) Engine(s)	W	W	W	W
(48) Propeller(s)	W	W	W	W

(50) Weather at the time of accident High overcast 8/10 top of overcast 12,000 ft. Visibility good through breaks in clouds.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident NO
(52) Cleared from Fairmont AAF (53) To Fairmont AAF (54) Kind of clearance Local

(55) Pilot's mission Formation Training Flight

(56) Nature of accident Aircraft collision.

(57) Cause of accident Accident occurred when pilot flying in a four (4) ship formation flew his ship into another ship.

RESTRICTED

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

A Flight of four B-24 type aircraft were flying a normal diamond formation at 20,000 feet indicated altitude. The number two ship, ship No. 42-7657 dropped back out of formation. The pilot of the number four ship, ship No. 42-7673 decided to close up to number two position. When he did so it is believed that he did not know the exact position of the former number two ship. Shortly after the new number two ship, ship number 42-7673 had assumed it's new position (number two) a crash occurred. The two ships involved were the new number two ship and the ship that had previously fallen back out of position, ship number 42-7657. It is not known what parts of the aircraft concerned collided, but it is believed that the tail section of Aircraft number 42-7673 (new number two) was damaged. This ship dived did a half roll to the right then the left wing came off, it went into a spin until it crashed. The other ship apparently was held under control until it had reached a fairly low altitude (approximately 1500 feet) at which point it went into a spin and crashed.

The Co-Pilot of Aircraft number 42-7673 was thrown out of his ship and parachuted to safety. No one else used a parachute.

It is normal procedure for the number four ship to replace the number two ship automatically if the latter falls out of formation.

RESPONSIBILITY

There is no evidence of lack of supervision.

There is no evidence indicating sabotage.

It is believed that the accident is the result of 100% pilot error.

From evidence obtainable it is impossible to fairly apportion the pilot error between the pilots of the two ships concerned.

RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION TO PREVENT REPETITION

It is recommended that a ship leaving a formation definitely indicate either by radio or by visual signal that he is leaving formation.

Robert E. Eaton
ROBERT E. EATON, Aircraft Accident Officer,
COLONEL, A.C.

Frederick L. Andrews
FREDERICK L. ANDREWS, 15th Wing Representative,
LT. COL., A.C.

John H. Rearden
JOHN H. REARDEN,
MAJOR, A.C.

Linnon R. Blackman
LINNON R. BLACKMAN,
CAPTAIN, A.C.

Monroe C. Guillen
MONROE C. GUILLEN,
CAPTAIN, A.C.

Frederick S. Ricketts
FREDERICK S. RICKETTS,
CAPTAIN, M.C.

Roland H. Steele
ROLAND H. STEELE,
1ST. LT., A.C.

Henry B. Holmes
HENRY B. HOLMES,
2ND LT., A.C.

Date

D. R. Hooper

October 28, 1943.

Sergeant

35614350

724th Bomb Squadron (H)

Fairmont Army Air Field

Waist Gunner

Armorer Gunner

B-24-E

42-64423

I, D. R. Hooper, 35614350, 724th Bomb Squadron (H), Fairmont Army Air Field, Geneva, Nebraska being duly sworn deposes and says that on the afternoon of October 25, 1943 at approximately 4:00 PM I was in plane 42-64423 sitting back against the left waist gun talking to the second engineer through the interphone when I looked out through the right waist window and saw a plane rolling with left wing splitting and coming off as far in as number one (1) engine. The plane kept rolling and tumbling down through the clouds out of my view. This was apparently plane No. 42-7573. Then I looked back and saw another plane making a steep diving bank to the right. My plane obstructed the view further.

RESTRICTED

D. R. Hooper
D. R. Hooper,
Bgt, AC.

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

NAME: MRS FRED KUBICEK

DATE: 10-27-43

ADDRESS: R.D. 7

CITY: Milligan

STATE Nebraska

TEL. NO. None

STATEMENT: I, Mrs. Fred Kubicek, Milligan, Nebraska, being duly sworn deposes and says that on the afternoon of October 25, 1943 at approximately 4-30 P.M. I was in my house when I heard an explosion like thunder that shook the windows, I then rushed out of the house and saw splinters and big chunks of metal sliding down at a steep angle. When the big pieces landed there was an explosion (this was apparently ship 42-7673). After this I saw another plane, plane 42-7657 coming out of the clouds and moving north towards my farm. It seemed to be gliding silently. I watched it go over my straw pile on my field and then the nose dropped down and the ship went into a spin made about three turns in the spin then came out and dropped straight down and landed in my neighbor, Mike Stech's back yard. Then there was an explosion followed by black smoke and then flames started spreading all over.

RESTRICTED

Mrs. Fred Kubicek
Mrs. FRED KUBICEK

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

NAME: JERRY KRUPICKA DATE: 10-27-43

ADDRESS: R.D. # 1

CITY: Milligan STATE Nebraska TEL NO. None

STATEMENT: I, Jerry Krupicka, farmer, Milligan, Nebraska, being duly sworn deposes and says that on the afternoon of October 25, 1943 at the approximate time of 3-45 P.M. . I was shucking corn in my corn field when I heard a rattling thundering crash then in about two minutes parts of an airplane 42-7673 came through the clouds and crashed to the ground. Pieces seemed to be scattered over a quarter of a mile area. I saw a second plane 42-7657 coming very low over my field with the wings rocking at about a thirty degree angle. It seemed to be losing speed and altitude. I thought it would land alright so I went towards the first plane that crashed plane 42-7673

RESTRICTED

Jerry Krupicka
JERRY KRUPICKA

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

NAME: FRANK HROMADKA D.T.B: 10-27-43
ADDRESS: R.D. # 1
CITY: Milligan STATE: Nebraska TEL. NO. Milligan 1632

STATEMENT: I Frank Hromadka, farmer of Milligan, Nebraska, being duly sworn deposes and says that on the afternoon of October 25, 1943 at the approximate time of 4-15 P.M. being in my cornfield, did hear a crash followed by a bubbling sound. A few seconds later one large piece of airplane 42-7673 came down exploded and caught fire. This was followed by two other large pieces that caught fire but did not explode. The air seemed to be filled with all kinds of small parts that scattered over an area of two miles. The large parts of airplane 42-7673 had just hit the ground when I saw another plane 42-7657 come through the clouds and go off to the north as if it was going to land good, then it started to spin crashed to the ground, and exploded. Flames and smoke were visible at that time. I then went to the house to telephone for help.

RESTRICTED

Frank Hromadka
FRANK HROMADKA

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

NAME: MILO HERMODKA DATE: 10-27-43
ADDRESS: R.D. # 1
CITY: Milligan STATE Nebraska Tel. No. Milligan 4632

STATEMENT: I, Milo Hermodka, of Milligan, Nebraska being duly sworn depose
and says that on the afternoon of October 25, 1943 at approximately 4-15 P.M.
I was working with my father Frank Hermodka in our corn field where I witnessed
the same aircraft accident and am in agreement with his statements. In addition
I saw one man parachute to the ground very shortly after the explosion. He got
up and ran toward a car parked on the Meridian Road.

RESTRICTED

Milo Hermodka
MILO HERMODKA

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

NAME: FRED KUBICEK

DATE: 10-27-43

ADDRESS: R.D. # 1

CITY: Milligan

STATE Nebraska

TEL NO. None

STATEMENT: I, Fred Kubicek, farmer of Milligan, Nebraska being duly sworn deposes
and says that on the afternoon of October 25, 1943 at approximately 3-30 P.M.
I was at a farmers home Jerry Henrich's located two mile from scene of accident
installing a wind mill. I heard engines on an airplane not working very good
above the clouds. Shortly, I heard a crash and then I saw one big piece that
resembled an airplane come out of the clouds and crash on the ground. As soon as it
hit I heard an explosion, then smoke and flames shot up in the air (this was
apparently plane # 42-7673).

RESTRICTED

Fred Kubicek
FRED KUBICEK

George D. Finkbiner

Oct. 28, 1943.

2nd Lt.

0811054

724th Bomb Squadron (H)

Fairmont Army Air Field

Co-Pilot

Pilot

B-24-E

42-64423

I, George D. Finkbiner, 0811054, 2nd Lt., 724th Bomb Squadron (H) Fairmont Army Air Field, Geneva, Nebraska being duly sworn deposes and says that on the afternoon of October 25, 1943 at approximately 4:00 PM I was Co-Piloting plane 42-64423 when I glanced out the window to my right and saw a plane diving as if pulling out of right wing formation. Then very slowly it came up in a half roll to the right and as it was up side down the left wing folded off and went up. The balance of the plane split-8'd out of my view behind our wing. (This plane was apparently 42-7673)

George D. Finkbiner
George D. Finkbiner,
2nd Lt., AC.

STATEMENT OF CREW MEMBER

NAME: Klein, Melvin, NMI. DATE: 10-26-43
RANK: 2nd Lt., AC. ASN: O-750618
ORGANIZATION: 724th Bomb Squadron
STATION: Fairmont Army Air Field DUTY: C.P.
RATING: Pilot AIRCRAFT TYPE: B-24-B
AAF NO.: 42- 7673

STATEMENT: I Melvin Klein O-750618 2nd Lt., AC, 724th Bomb Squadron
Fairmont Army Air Field, Geneva, Nebraska, being duly sworn deposes
and says that on the afternoon of October 25, 1943 at approximately
1920 hours Greenwich time a formation of four ships was flying in a
diamond formation at 20,000 feet. The pilot of 42- 7673 located behind
the lead ship moved into the right wing position after 42- 7657 had
dropped back out of that position. 42- 7657 at this time was out of
my vision. We were just about flying in the right wing position when
the accident occurred. At this time I heard a dull crunching sound
and we immediately went into a tight spin, I tried to help the pilot
with the controls but with no result. I reached for the arm belt and
at that time was thrown violently against the center pedestal and knew
no more. Upon coming to I was in the clouds and pulled the ripcord and
made a successful descent.

RESTRICTED

Melvin Klein
Malvin Klein,
2nd Lt., AC.

HEADQUARTERS
Fairmont Army Air Field
Office of the Operations Officer
Geneva, Nebraska

28, October 1943

County of Fillmore)
: SS
State of Nebraska)

I, John W. Eskew, 18178995, Corporal, 724th Bomb Squadron (H), Fairmont Army Air Field, Geneva, Nebraska being duly sworn deposes and says that airplane #42-7673 was completely filled, fuel and oil before take-off on October 25, 1943 at approximately 1530 hours.

n b
JOHN W. ESKEW,
Corporal, AC.

RESTRICTED

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

NAME: FRED STECH DATE: 10-27-43

ADDRESS: R.D. # 1

CITY: Milligan STATE: Nebraska TEL. NO.: Milligan 4622

STATEMENT: I Fred Stech, farmer of Milligan Nebraska, being duly sworn deposes and says that on the afternoon of October 25, 1943 at approximately 4-30 P.M. My brother Mike Stech and I were driving to the corn field when first we heard a racket and asked one another what it could be. Then we saw the explosion of plane 42-7673 and then I looked up and said you had better get out of the way, there is another one coming down and plane 42-7657 was right over us. My brother turned the horses away from the crash and made them go as fast as possible. The plane was coming down nose first and spinning around. The ship seemed to be in one piece when it hit the ground. Then there was a loud explosion and we saw smoke and flames. This occurred at approximately 4-30 P.M.

Fred Stech

FRED STECH

I Mike Stech, farmer of Milligan, Nebraska, being duly sworn deposes and says that I agree completely with the above statement of the airplane accident on our property October 25, 1943 at the approximate hour of 4-30 P.M.

Mike Stech

MIKE STECH

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT
A.A.F.
Form No. 17
(Approved June 15, 1927)

WAR DEPARTMENT
AIR CORPS

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY CERTIFICATE

(Address of owner or tenant)

(Date)

I hereby agree that the landing on my premises, on the above date, of
Army Airplane No. _____ from _____
resulted in no financial damage whatsoever to my property.

(Signature of pilot)

(Signature of owner or tenant)

Mike Stach, R. D. # 1
(Address of owner or tenant)

Milligan, Nebraska

October 30, 1943

(Date)

I hereby agree that the landing on my premises, on the above date, of
Army Airplane No. 42-7657 from Fairmont Army Air Field, Geneva, Nebraska

the following estimated damage:

27 hogs killed @ \$30.00 per hog	\$810.00	Replacement of windows in house	\$ 20.00
1 Sow killed at \$57.80 per sow	57.80	Total damage	1372.80
100 chickens killed @ \$1.25 per chicken	125.00		
1 chicken house completely destroyed	230.00		
1 hog pen completely destroyed	105.00		
Damage to 2nd chicken house and granary	25.00		

(Signature of pilot)

Mike Stach
(Signature of owner or tenant)

(See instructions on back)

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT
A.A.F.
Form No. 17
(Approved June 15, 1927)

WAR DEPARTMENT
AIR CORPS

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY CERTIFICATE

(Address of owner or tenant)

(Date)

I hereby agree that the landing on my premises, on the above date, of
Army Airplane No. _____ from _____
resulted in no financial damage whatsoever to my property.

(Signature of pilot)

(Signature of owner or tenant)

Mrs. Anna Matejka R.D. # 1
(Address of owner or tenant)

Milligan, Nebraska

October 29, 1943

(Date)

I hereby agree that the landing on my premises, on the above date, of
Army Airplane No. h2-7673 from Fairmont Army Air Field, Geneva, Nebraska
the following estimated damage:

Damage to cornfield	\$ 16.95
Damage to wheatfield	30.25
Damage to fences	11.50
Damage to team of two horses	150.00

Total damage

\$ 211.70

(Signature of pilot)

Mrs. Anna Matejka
(Signature of owner or tenant)

(See instructions on back)

RESTRICTED