

Accident No.

442-14-501

Date

Checked by

W.M.

4-1-49

Analyzed by

D.L.H.

4-4-49

Copied for Wright

Field by \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1225:9-43

Accident No.

Pilot's Name

MINNICKS

Nature Group

02 COLLISION-IN-FLIGHT WITH OBJECTS

Specific Nature

06 WITH-EARTH

Underlying Nature

82 Faulty operation of Aircraft

5590

Cause Group

01 P.E. Judgment

Specific Cause

13 Momentary lapse of mental efficiency

Underlying Cause

17 Lack of care

4590

Cause Group

02 P.E. Technique

Specific Cause

27 Momentary lack of proficiency

Underlying Cause

14 Temporary mental deficiency due to excitement

AAF 170

ACCIDENT NO. *44-2-14-501*

WAR DEPARTMENT  
 U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

*01-060*

(1) Place *1 1/2 MILE SE AAF 170* (2) Date *14 FEB 1944* (3) Time *0906*  
 AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model *A-20G-25* (5) A. F. No. *43-9213* (6) Station *AAF 170*  
 Organization: (7) *IX BC 9TH AF* (8) *16 BOMB (L)* (9) *671ST BOMB (L)* (10) *Z393*  
 (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)
<i>01</i> P	MINNICKS, WILLIAM D.	PILOT	0-747855	2LT	<i>18</i>	AAF	9TH	FATAL	<i>4</i>



(20) *acc #1* MINNICKS WILLIAM D. *PILOT CHANGED WITH ACCIDENT* (21) *0-747855* (22) *2ND LT* (23) *18* (24) *AAF*  
 (Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)  
 Assigned (25) *IX BC 9TH AF* (26) *16 BOMB (L)* (27) *671 BOMB (L)* (28) *AAF 170* *Z393*  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Attached for flying (29) *-* (30) *-* (31) *-* (32) *-* (33) *K*  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Original rating (34) *PILOT* (35) *6-22-43* Present rating (36) *PILOT* (37) *6-22-43* Instrument rating (38) *12-11-43*  
 (Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

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

(38) This type <i>A-20</i>	<i>138:45</i>	(42) Instrument time last 6 months	<i>30:00</i>
(39) This model <i>A-20G</i>	<i>91:00</i>	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	<i>00:00</i>
(40) Last 90 days	<i>47:50</i>	(44) Night time last 6 months	<i>-</i>
(41) Total	<i>452:55</i>	(45) Night time last 30 days	<i>-</i>

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE *F*

DAMAGE	(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <i>W 5</i>	
(47) Engine(s) <i>W 5</i>	
(48) Propeller(s) <i>W 5</i>	

(50) Weather at the time of accident *VISIBILITY - 2 MILES IN LIGHT HAZE AND LIGHT SNOW SHOWER. 8-8/10 LOW CLOUD, BASE 3000 FEET. WINDS - SOUTHERLY AT 3-8 M.P.H. NP*  
 (51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident *NO*  
 (52) Cleared from *AAF 170* (53) to *AAF 170* (54) Kind of clearance *CONTACT*  
*Z393* *Z393*  
 (55) Pilot's mission *LOCAL TRAINING - SEE INCLOSURE NO. 1.*

(56) Nature of accident *WHILE ENGAGED IN EVASIVE MANEUVERS WITH PURSUIT THE PILOT PULLED UP SHARPLY INTO THE CLOUDS AND WHILE IN THE CLOUDS ATTEMPTED A STEEP SPIRAL DEVELOPING INTO NEARLY A HALF ROLL WHEN COMING OUT OF THE CLOUDS. IN AN ATTEMPT TO COME OUT OF THE HALF ROLL, THE PILOT PULLED THE AIRPLANE INTO A HIGH SPEED STALL AND CRASHED.*

(57) Cause of accident *ATTEMPTING TO PERFORM VIOLENT MANEUVERS WHILE AT TOO LOW AN ALTITUDE AND THE FACT THAT MOMENTARY INSTRUMENT CONDITIONS WERE ENCOUNTERED WHILE BEGINNING THE VIOLENT MANEUVERS.*

*02-06*

RESTRICTED

*2-8-10-13-80*  
*4-4-44*

## DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

The pilot was engaging in maneuvers with friendly pursuits on a routine orientation mission. During the period of maneuvers with pursuits, the pilot pulled up into the clouds which were at about twenty-four hundred (2400) feet. In an attempt to lose the chasing pursuits, the pilot put the airplane into a steep spiral which continued on until the airplane was nearly on its back when the airplane emerged from the clouds. When the pilot realized his position, he attempted to complete a half-roll from an altitude of approximately eighteen hundred (1800) feet. During the time that the pilot was attempting to pull the airplane out of the dive, he encountered a high speed stall which caused additional loss of altitude and a crash striking the ground at an angle of approximately fifteen degrees (15°) below the horizontal. The pilot exhibited poor judgment in attempting violent maneuvers with insufficient altitude to complete such maneuvers. It is the belief of the Aircraft Accident Committee that a half-roll was not a predetermined maneuver but was a result of performing a steep wingover or split S which resulted in the airplane continuing on over until it was nearly in the inverted position upon emerging from the clouds. The above deductions are arrived at from the statement of Mr. H. P. Ridgewell who witnessed the entire accident and states in the first paragraph of his statement that the aircraft disappeared in a southwesterly direction into the clouds and reappeared diving in a northeasterly direction. This approximate one hundred-eighty degree (180°) change of direction could have been accomplished by an inverted maneuver. Mr. H. P. Ridgewell was questioned as to the position of the aircraft, and he was unable to provide a statement. The inverted position of the aircraft was determined from the statement of Second Lieutenant Leonard, who observed the plane from the approximate distance of five hundred (500) yards.

It is recommended that friendly bombardment and pursuit aircraft do not engage in evasive maneuvers in close proximity except on scheduled training and operational missions.

STATEMENT OF CAPT. WILLIAM J. MENG . . . SEE INCLOSURE NO. 2.

STATEMENT OF 2ND LT. THOMAS J. LEONARD . . . SEE INCLOSURE NO. 3.

STATEMENT OF MR. H. P. RIDGEWELL . . . SEE INCLOSURE NO. 4.

PHOTOGRAPHS . . . SEE INCLOSURE NO. 5.

APPROVED:

*Harold L. Face*  
 HAROLD L. FACE,  
 Colonel, Air Corps,  
 Commanding.

*Thomas R. Ford*  
 Signature THOMAS R. FORD, Lt. Col. AC

*Lawrence S. Towles, Jr.*  
 Signature LAWRENCE S. TOWLES, JR., Major AC

*John G. Kehler*  
 Signature JOHN G. KEHLER, Major, AC

Date 21 FEB 1944

14 February 1944.

STATEMENT

When I first saw the aircraft it was flying in a south-westerly direction. It then started upward and disappeared for a moment in the clouds, and I think he performed a stunt of some kind. When the aircraft appeared again it was diving in a northeasterly direction and crashed to the ground at a slight angle.

The aircraft seemed to be under control and traveling at high speed. I was standing about one hundred yards from where the aircraft struck the ground and I witnessed the whole show.

There were two or three fighter planes close behind the aircraft before it disappeared into the clouds.

Both engines were running and the wings were level during the dive. The nose and propeller struck the ground first and the whole aircraft exploded and scattered over quite a large area.

The crash occurred approximately at 09:05 A.M. local time.

I am the owner of the property on which the aircraft crashed. The address is; Sugarlane Farm, Syble Heddingham, Halstead, Essex County, England.

/s/ H. P. RIDGEWELL

/t/ H. P. RIDGEWELL

▲ TRUE COPY

*Clarence S. Towles, Jr.*  
CLARENCE S. TOWLES, JR.  
Major, Air Corps.

14 February 1944

S T A T E M E N T

On February 14, 1944 at approximately 0900, I was flying about 4 miles northeast of Wethersfield airfield, preparing to land.

Visibility was poor, and this particular section of the sky was heavy with traffic of fighter and light bomber aircraft. While turning to avoid another aircraft, I immediately noticed another A-20G-25 at my approximate altitude (1800 feet) and at 90 degrees from me. The aircraft was on its back, about 500 yards off my left wing. While I was watching it, the plane went into a steep dive and crashed into the ground, exploding.

It is my opinion that 2nd Lt. Minnicks endeavored to avoid the crash by trying to pull up sharply, but only succeeded in putting the plane in a high speed stall, for the nose of the plane seemed to rise sharply for an instant, then suddenly mushed into the ground. Of what happened before my first sight of the aircraft on its back, I have no knowledge.

I certify that this statement is, to the best of my knowledge, a true account.

*Thomas J. Leonard*

THOMAS J. LEONARD,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps

14 February 1944

S T A T E M E N T

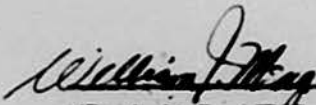
On the 14th day of February 1944 at approximately 0900 o'clock I was flying an A-20G-25 airplane in the area 2 miles and 290 degrees from Wetherfield. I noticed an A-20G-25 airplane being chased by two (2) P-47's and one (1) P-51 airplanes. The planes were 20 degrees to my port and one mile ahead when I first sighted them. I was flying at an altitude of 2200 feet and guessed them to be at an altitude of 1600 feet and in a slight dive. The airspeed of the A-20G-25 and the three pursuit planes must have been around 300 mph. The lead pursuit ship appeared to be about 25 feet behind and approximately the same distance to the starboard, just before the A-20G-25 started into a climb. The A-20G-25 was climbing at an angle of about 60 degrees, and went into the clouds at approximately 2400 feet. Only one P-47 went into the clouds in pursuit of the A-20G-25 airplane.

It must have been about forty or fifty seconds later when I noticed the A-20G-25 at 1000 feet diving towards the ground at about 400 mph. The A-20G-25 appeared to have contacted the ground at an angle of 15 degrees and with the right wing slightly low.

The A-20G-25 exploded immediately upon contact. I circled the wreckage twice and then noticed vehicles leaving Wethersfield to investigate the accident.

It is believed by the undersigned that the accident was caused by a power on stall. It takes this type airplane about 4000 feet to pull out of such a maneuver. However, there is a possibility of having encountered severe icing conditions in the clouds.

The accident could have been avoided if the two different types of aircraft had not been comparing their capabilities.

  
WILLIAM J. MENG,  
Capt., Air Corps.

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

Station # 170  
14 February 1944.

E X T R A C T

OPERATIONS ORDER )  
NUMBER 3 )

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:

PILOT	<u>Minnicks, W.D., 2nd Lt.</u>	AIRPLANE	<u>A-20G 213</u>	MISSION	<u>Training</u>
CREW	<u>None</u>	TAKE-OFF	<u>0900</u>	LAND	<u>1000</u>
BOMB LOAD	<u>None</u>	AMMUNITION	<u>None</u>	ROUTE OUT	<u>Local</u>
ROUTE BACK	<u>Local</u>	Fuel LOADING	<u>Full</u>	ALTITUDE	<u>2000'</u>

\* \* \* \* \*

By order of Captain WILLETTTS:

LLOYD F. DUNN,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
Operations Officer.

OFFICIAL:

LLOYD F. DUNN,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
Operations Officer.

CERTIFIED A TRUE EXTRACT:

*Lloyd F. Dunn*  
LLOYD F. DUNN,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
Operations Officer.



LGAD-109-4-42114-FEB-44[A/C 43-9213-A20-CRASH)



(LGAD-109-1-42114-FEB-44[A/C 43-9213-A-20-CRASH)



LGAD-109-2-42114-FEB-44[A/C 43-9213-A20-CRASH)



(LGAD-109-3-42114-FEB-44[A/C 43-9213-A20-CRASH)



16AD-109-4-42114-FWB-441A/C-43-9213-A20-CRASH)



(16AD-109-1-42114-FWB-441A/C-43-9213-A-20-CRASH)



16AD-109-2-42114-FWB-441A/C-43-9213-A20-CRASH)



(16AD-109-3-42114-FWB-441A/C-43-9213-A20-CRASH)



16AD-109-4-42114-FEB-44(A/C 43-9213-A20-CRASH)



(16AD-109-1-42114-FEB-44(A/C 43-9213-A-20-CRASH)



16AD-109-2-42114-FEB-44(A/C 43-9213-A20-CRASH)



16AD-109-3-42114-FEB-44(A/C 43-9213-A20-CRASH)



(6AD-109-4-42114-FWB-641A/C 43-9213-A20 - CRASH)



(6AD-109-1-42114-FWB-641A/C 43-9213-A-20 - CRASH)



(6AD-109-2-42114-FWB-641A/C 43-9213-A20 - CRASH)



(6AD-109-3-42114-FWB-641A/C 43-9213-A20 - CRASH)

R E S T R I C T E D  
H E A D Q U A R T E R S  
FOUR HUNDRED SIXTEENTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)  
Office of the Commanding Officer

APO 638, U. S. ARMY,  
22 February 1944.

*360.33*  
SUBJECT: Transmittal of AAF Form No. 14.

TO : Commanding General, IX Bomber Command, APO 638, U. S. Army.

Transmitted herewith are four (4) copies of AAF Form No. 14, Report of Aircraft Accident, on A-20G-25 airplane, Army serial number 43-9213.

For the Commanding Officer:

4 incls:  
AAF Form #14 (with incls).



*George Schenkein*  
GEORGE SCHENKEIN,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Adjutant.

*360.33*  
HEADQUARTERS IX BOMBER COMMAND, APO 638, U. S. ARMY, 5 March 1944.

1st Ind.

E-J-4

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

Approved.

For the Commanding General:

*Richard C. Sanders*  
RICHARD C. SANDERS,  
Colonel, Air Corps,  
Chief of Staff.

4 Incls:  
n/c (one cy each w/d)

R E S T R I C T E D

360.33

2nd Ind.

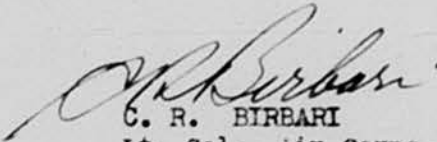
E-I-12

HEADQUARTERS, NINTH AIR FORCE, APO 696, U. S. ARMY, 10 March 1944.

To: Headquarters, Office of Flying Safety, Army Air Forces, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Report and recommendation of Aircraft Accident Committee approved.

For the Commanding General:

  
C. R. BIRBARI  
Lt. Col., Air Corps,  
Asst. Adj. General.

4 Incls:

n/c, 2 cys ea w/d.

1085

- 2 -

R E S T R I C T E D