

RESTRICTED

ACCIDENT No. 45-1-25-516

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

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

3-6-45

Rel 1
Y300-0
02-001

(1) Place Station A-55 (2) Date 25 January 1945 (3) Time 1746
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model A-26B-25 (5) A. F. No. 42-39349 (6) Station A-55
Organization: (7) 9th ED Ninth AF (8) 416 Bomb (L) (9) 668 Bomb (L)
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (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	Hale, Wilbur L.	Pilot	0-753349	1st Lt.	18	AC	Ninth AF	None	None
G	Geyer, John F.	Gunner	35629198	S/Sgt	38	AC	Ninth AF	None	None

(20) Hale Wilbur L. (21) 0-753349 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 18 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned 9th ED Ninth AF (25) 416 Bomb (L) (26) 668 Bomb (L) (27) A-55
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (28) (29) (30) (31) (32)
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 8/30/43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 8/30/43 Instrument rating (37)
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type A-26 67:50 (42) Instrument time last 6 months -
(39) This model A-26B 60:00 (43) Instrument time last 30 days -
(40) Last 90 days 708:45 (44) Night time last 6 months -
(41) Total 708:45 (45) Night time last 30 days -

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>0 3</u>	<u>Underside of fuselage; both nacelles.</u>
(47) Engine(s) <u>0 3 0 3</u>	<u>Both engines sudden stoppage.</u>
(48) Propeller(s) <u>0 3 0 3</u>	<u>Both bent.</u>

(50) Weather at the time of accident 1 - 2 miles visibility. Ceiling 6,000 feet. NL

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

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

(55) Pilot's mission Local formation training 4

(56) Nature of accident landing accident. wheels up landing. 4G

(57) Cause of accident Pilot error and airfield conditons H

(58) Has the Form 54 been submitted? No. 4-60 82 51B

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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

NARRATIVE:

On the afternoon of 25 January 1945, Lt. Hale took off for a training flight in aircraft A-26B-25, ACSN 41-39349. When he retracted his landing gear the left wheel came up through the top of the nacelle. He decided to land immediately, but was unable to extend the left landing gear. After repeated attempts were unsuccessful he was advised to come in for a belly landing.

Investigation disclosed that the main actuating cylinder had been sheared from the support assembly, main landing gear upper retracting link. This could have been caused only by some externally applied force which pushed the landing gear beyond its limit.

A two foot bank of snow borders the sides of the runway. The airfield controller reported that the left gear of Lt. Hale's aircraft hit this bank of snow just after take-off. With the gear in the process of retracting, it would not have taken much force to so increase the momentum of the gear that the failure could occur. Consequently it is believed that, when the retracting gear contacted the snow bank, the landing gear was forced beyond its limit and hit the top of the nacelle.

RESPONSIBILITY:

70% pilot error in technique. 30% airfield conditions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

On any cross-wind take-off extreme care must be exercised by the pilot to insure that any drift is killed during and immediately after the take-off run. This is especially applicable when there are obstructions to the side of the runway.

INCLOSURES: 8

- Incl. #1 - Statement of Pilot.
- Incl. #2 - Statement of Commander.
- Incl. #3 - Statement of Crew Chief.
- Incl. #4 - Statement of Squadron Engineering Officer.
- Incl. #5 - Statement of Group Engineering Officer.
- Incl. #6 - Statement of Flying Control Officer.
- Incl. #7 - Statement of Airfield Controller.
- Incl. #8 - Photographs.

APPROVED:

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

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Signature

Richard F. Shafer
(Investigating Officer)
RICHARD F. SHAEFER,
Captain, Air Corps,
Investigating Officer.

Date 30 January 1945.

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25 January 1945

S T A T E M E N T

I took off at 1518 hours in A-26B-25 aircraft, AAF No. 41-39349. Take-off roll was started about 25 feet from snow bank on left side of runway. I took off in # 3 position directly behind leader. Take-off roll was started 15 seconds after # 2 ship. No prop wash was encountered during take-off. Original take-off heading was maintained until aircraft was well up in the air and the landing gear had been retracted. Fifty three (53) inches and 2700 rpm were used. Approximately fifty feet (50) off the ground, the wheels were retracted and the left wheel went through the top of the nacelle. The rivets on top of the nacelle were pulled out and this damage was visible from the cockpit. Group Operations was immediately notified and I was instructed to try all my landing gear emergency procedures. This consisted of putting the gear control handle in down position, putting emergency hydraulic selector in gear down position, and pumping hydraulic pressure up to approximately 1600 lbs per square inch. Airspeed varied between 135 and 150 mph as I attempted to extend the left gear. The nose wheel and the right wheel extended perfectly every time.

After trying all emergency procedures innumerable times, I was instructed to take my bomb load of four (4) 500 lb Composition B bombs to the bombing range. I flew number three position on 024, an A-20J, and salvoed my bombs. Upon returning I was instructed to lower my nose gear and right gear and, while maintaining 170 mph airspeed, land and attempt to jolt the left gear down by bouncing the right gear on the runway.

This also proved unsuccessful and Group Operations instructed me to retract my gear and crash land. I instructed my gunner to assume crash position. I opened my hatch and fixed my crash harness. Airspeed on the final approach was 140 mph and 36 degrees of flaps were used. Crossing the end of the runway at 130 mph, I cut my mixture control, battery switches and Ignition switches. Props could be heard hitting the ground and the plane settled very gently. Rudder control was used up until aircraft had almost completely stopped. Neither I nor my gunner was injured in any way. The landing occurred about 1755.

W. L. Hale

WILBUR L. HALE,
1st Lt., Air Corps.

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Incl.

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25 January 1945

S T A T E M E N T

I was flying in A-26B-25, 41-39349. We took off at approximately 1530 hours on runway 020 heading north. We were number three to take off behind Lt C. C. Mish. We took off on the left hand side of the runway about 20 or 25 ft from the side. I felt no unnatural jolts on the take off and I sincerely believe that nothing came in contact with the aircraft on take off. At about fifty feet altitude our landing gear was being retracted and for some unknown reason our left main gear seemed to try and go completely through the top of the nacelle. The rivets in the seam of the nacelle were torn loose and one piece of skin was being pulled up by the slip stream. I immediately called the pilot and notified him of the damage. He was already aware of the fact. He in turn called flying control and told them our situation.

We were going to try and land but our left gear would not come down. Flying control was again notified of this. From that time on we tried all sorts of emergency procedures. I crawled up to help the pilot with the hydraulic pump. After all our efforts failed we were told to go to the bombing range and drop our four five-hundred pound composition B bombs. This was carried out.

When we returned to the field I went back to the front and we tried all of our emergency procedures again with no results. At this time a piece of skin from the left nacelle blew off. We also tried landing on our nose and right main gear in hopes that this would shake down our left gear. We were directed to do this by flying control. Nothing resulted from this effort.

The pilot was then instructed to belly the aircraft in. This was carried out in the best form humanly possible. Riding in the gunners cockpit, I felt no excessive jar. In all it was a comparatively smooth landing.

John F. Geyer
JOHN F. GEYER,
S/Sgt 35629198

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Incl #2

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25 January 1945

S T A T E M E N T

I hereby certify that all necessary inspections and maintenance had been performed and all defects were properly shown on AAF Forms 41B and AAF Form 1A prior to the last flight of aircraft A-26B-25, AAF No. 41-39349.

Charles U. Blanchard
CHARLES U. BLANCHARD
T/Sgt., Crew Chief.

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Incl #3

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25 January 1945

STATEMENT

I made a thorough investigation and determined that all possible precautions had been taken to fit this aircraft, A-26B-25, AAF No. 41-39349 for safe flight prior to take-off and no mechanical defects existed other than those shown on the AAF Form 1A.

Joe Sherman
JOE SHERMAN,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Asst. Engineering Officer.

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Incl #1

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S-T-A-T-E-M-E-N-T

Investigation of the accident which occurred on A-26E aircraft AAF No 41-39349 on which the left main landing gear failed to extend, revealed that the main actuating cylinder had sheared from the support assembly, main landing gear upper retracting link. This prevented the actuating cylinder from releasing the up lock and as no emergency system is provided, a belly landing resulted. It was also noted that the support assembly, main landing gear upper retracting link forging had been broken in half. It is my belief that some force was placed on the landing gear during the retracting process which forced the landing gear beyond its limit and consequently it hit the top of the nacelle. The skin on top of the nacelle was missing after landing and also one former was torn out and one bent.

William H Moffett
WILLIAM H. MOFFETT,
CWO, U.S.A.,
Group Engineering Officer.

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Incl 45

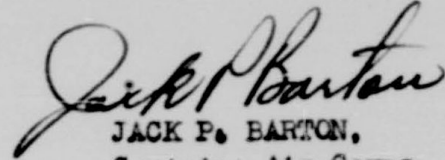
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STATEMENT

The condition of runway 02 at approximately 1520 hours, 25 January 1945, when 1st Lt Wilbur L. Hale, in aircraft number 349 took off, was as follows:

Clear of snow and ice to a width of approximately 150 feet, the entire length of runway. However, there was a winrow of snow along the side of the runway about 2 feet in height. The surface of the runway that had been cleared was dry.



JACK P. BARTON,
Captain, Air Corps,
S. F. C. O.

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STATEMENT

In regards to aircraft number 349 piloted by 1st Lt Wilbur L. Hale, the aircraft took off with a formation of six ships on runway 02, and was the last aircraft to take off. I watched him go down the runway, from my position in the caravan, and when he started to leave the ground, the left wheel hit the snow bank, on the left side of the runway. A cloud of snow was thrown up, and for a minute, I could not see the left wheel. When he retracted the wheels, the nose wheel was nearly all the way up and the right wheel part way up, the left wheel was not in sight.

I immediately called the tower and told them what I had seen. Later in the afternoon, Lt Platter came out to the caravan and I told him what had happened.

Joseph W. Wilkinson Jr.
Joseph W. Wilkinson, Jr.
Sgt., 79th Sta Con Sq (Sp)

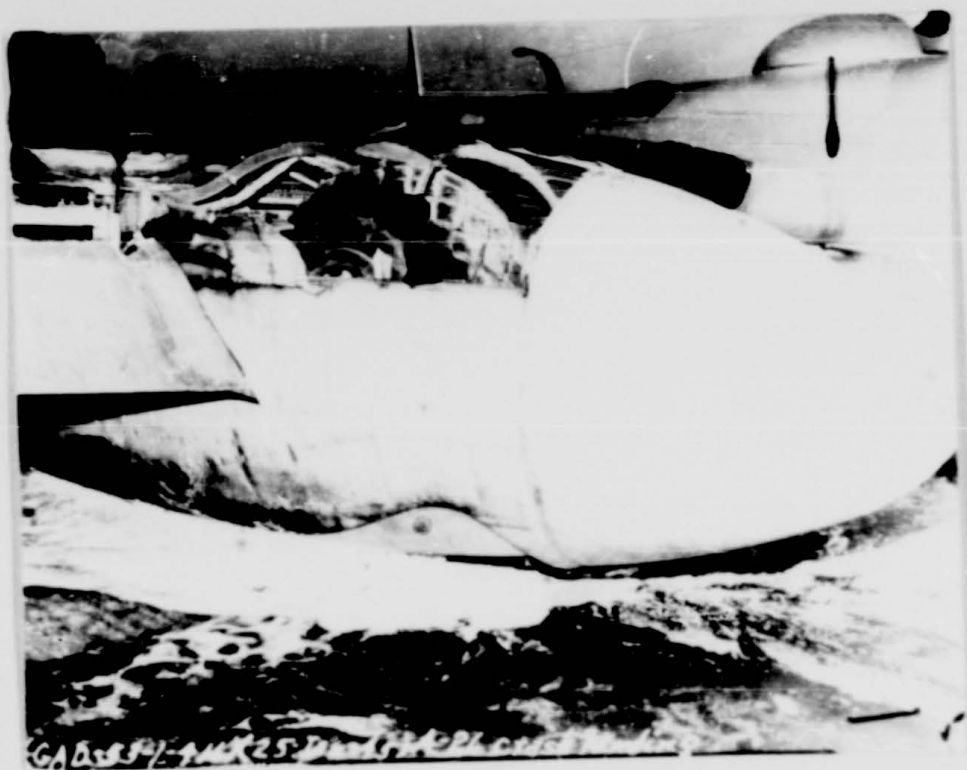
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Incl 7

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Encl #8

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E - R - 5

HEADQUARTERS
416TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

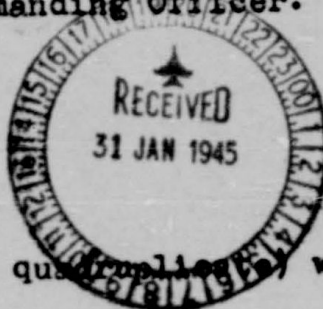
APO 140, U.S. Army,
31 January 1945.

SUBJECT: Transmittal of AAF Form 14.

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

Transmitted herewith is AAF Form 14 (in quadruplicate) with inclosures covering aircraft accident of Lt. Wilbur L. Hale in aircraft A-26B-25, ACSN 41-39349, on 25 January 1945.

For the Commanding Officer:



George Schenkein
GEORGE SCHENKEIN,
Captain, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

1 Incl - AAF Form 14 (in quadruplicate) with inclosures.

360.33 1st. Ind. E-Q-14
HEADQUARTERS 9TH BOMBARDMENT DIVISION (M), APO 140, U. S. ARMY, 5 February 1945.

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

Submitted in compliance with Memorandum 55-1, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, dated 27 November 1944.

For the Commanding General:



9 Incls:

- Incl 1 - AAF Form 14 (trip)
- Incl 2 - Statement of Lt. Hale, pilot (trip)
- Incl 3 - Statement of S/Sgt. Geyer (trip)
- Incl 4 - Statement of T/Sgt. Blanchard (trip)
- Incl 5 - Statement of Lt Sherman, Asst. Engr. Off. (trip)
- Incl 6 - Statement of CWO Moffett (trip)
- Incl 7 - Statement of Capt. Barton (trip)
- Incl 8 - Statement of Sgt. Wilkinson (trip)
- Incl 9 - Photos (trip)

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2nd Ind.

E-

HEADQUARTERS NINTH AIR FORCE, APO 696, US Army, 8 February 1945.

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

Report and recommendation of Aircraft Accident Officer approved.

For the Commanding General:

9 Incls: n/c (2 cys w/d)



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

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Accident No. 45-1-25-576

Date 3-14-45

Checked by [Signature]

Analyzed by [Signature] 3/16

Copied for Wright
Field by _____

Notes Captain Baker

3 May 45

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