

WAR DEPARTMENT

U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place 1 1/2 Mi. West of Portland, Maine (2) Date 11 July 1944 (3) Time 1642 EDT
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model A-26B (5) A. F. No. 43-22253 (6) Station Barksdale Fld, Louisiana
Organization: (7) 3rd Bomber Command (8) 3rd Bom (9) Sqdn T, Barksdale RTU (MB)
(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	Russell, Philip I.	P	0-683591	2nd Lt	18	AC	3rd B.C.	Fatal	None
E	Mifflin, Wallace (NMI)	E	39184309	S/Sgt	38	AC	3rd B.C.	Fatal	None
((Continued on Page 4))									
Civilian 16									
Civilian 15									



(20) Russell Philip I (21) 0-683591 (22) 2nd Lt. (23) 18 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned (25) 3rd Bomber Command (26) 331 B (27) Sqdn T, Barksdale (28) Barksdale Fld, La.
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) 3rd Bomber Command (30) 331 B (31) Sqdn T, Barksdale (32) Barksdale Fld, La.
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) P (34) 6-26-43 Present rating (35) P (36) 6-26-43 Instrument rating (37) 3 Nov 1944
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type 67:20 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 5:25
(39) This model 67:20 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 0:00
(40) Last 90 days 67:20 (44) Night time last 6 months 57:35
(41) Total 905:05 (45) Night time last 30 days 7:00

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

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

(50) Weather at the time of accident 500 Ft. 2 Mi. Fog.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident Yes.

(52) Cleared from Bradley Fld, Conn. (53) To Portland, Maine

(54) Kind of clearance CFR

(55) Pilot's mission Long range training.

(56) Nature of accident Crashed in fog.

(57) Cause of accident The pilot arrived at his destination to find that a fog bank had rolled up and had enveloped the south edge of the airport and, while attempting to circle the airport without losing sight of it at an altitude of about 200 to 250 feet, he made a steep turn, subsequently going into the fog bank where his right wing struck the ground cartwheeling the airplane into a group of buildings.

(58) Form 54 has not been submitted.

RESTRICTED

255

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

At approximately 1640, 11 July 1944, A-26B was observed approaching Portland Municipal Airport, Portland, Maine, from the south at an altitude of about 200 feet, flying parallel to the NS runway. The ship went off to the north disappearing momentarily in the haze and evidently made a left turn and approached the field a second time - this time in a SE direction and roughly paralleling the NW SE runway. The ship was last seen entering a fog bank at the SE end of the field in a tight vertical turn to the right. Immediately thereafter it was heard to crash and smoke was seen rising through the fog. The marks on the ground indicate that the ship hit on the right wing and cartwheeled into a trailer camp demolishing a number of the structures in the resultant explosion and fire. Subsequent investigation disclosed that the pilot of the ship, Lt Philip I. Russell, whose parents and wife and baby were awaiting his arrival at the airport, contacted the Portland Radio Range Station and requested landing instructions. The operator on duty advised the pilot of the surface wind and recommended a runway for landing. It is the understanding of this office that such action was clearly out of the scope of this operator's authority inasmuch as the Portland Radio Range Station had no authority to issue landing instructions to this aircraft when the field had been declared closed.

It is the findings of this board that the responsibility for the accident is contributable to a number of factors:

1. Lack of Training on the Part of Pilot:

a. Records show that in the last 90 days the pilot had flown 67 hours and 20 minutes all of which time was on the A-26B type aircraft, and instrument time for the last 6 months - 5 hours and 25 minutes, during the last 30 days - none, which is an indication that the pilot lacked experience in flying this type aircraft on instruments.

b. Further, testimony of witnesses indicates that the pilot started a steep turn just before disappearing into the fog bank at the edge of the field which is definitely poor technique for instrument flying.

2. Improper Clearance:

a. The pilot requested a CFR clearance and the Weather Officer, after putting the weather on the Form 23, advised the pilot to change his clearance from CFR to IFR which advice he disregarded. In addition, this flight was cleared in direct violation of AAF Letter 121-22.

b. The Operations Officer signed the Form 23 as a Contact Clearance when the conditions, as shown by the Weather Officer, clearly indicated the necessity for an IFR Clearance.

3. Unauthorized Landing Instructions:

a. Excerpts from the daily communication report of the Portland Range Station show "Field Closed at 1635". At 1641 the operator, upon a request for landing instructions from the pilot, gave him the wind direction and suggested a runway instead of advising him to return immediately to CFR conditions.

It is the recommendations of this board that:

1. Due to the excessive number of deaths of pilots on flights to their home town that the current program of publicizing such accidents in poster form be continually stressed by the Office of Flying Safety. It is further recommended that before a pilot is cleared on an extended cross country flight to his home that the Operations Officer ascertain that the pilot has qualified for an instrument rating on the type of ship to be flown.

Signature _____
(Investigating Officer)

255

Date _____

Description of Accident (Cont'd)

2. Operations Officers be impressed with the importance of carefully considering all factors of the AAF Form 23 before signing a clearance.

3. The next revision of AAF Form 23 contain a space wherein the pilot will show his instrument time on the type aircraft involved in the last three-month period.

William V. Ellis ^{*Luder*}
WILLIAM V. ELLIS, 2ND,
Major, Air Corps,
President, Aircraft Accident Bd.

Robert L. Ashenfelter
ROBERT L. ASHENFELTER,
1st Lt, Air Corps,
Member, Aircraft Accident Bd.

Edgar L. McDonald
EDGAR L. McDONALD,
1st Lt, Air Corps,
Recorder, Aircraft Accident Bd.

List of Civilian Personnel Involved in Crash

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Result To Personnel</u>
73 Gerrish, Albert E.	83 Trailer C-15, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Gerrish, Virginia M.	83 Trailer C-15, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Gerrish, Rose	83 Trailer C-15, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Gerrish, Roberta	83 Trailer C-15, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Robertson, George J.	83 Trailer C-13, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Robertson, Rita M.	83 Trailer C-13, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Allen, Annie R.	83 Trailer C-16, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Warren, Virginia	83 Trailer C-16, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Hume, Clarence F.	83 Trailer C-17, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Hume, Edna M.	83 Trailer C-17, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Hume, John	83 Trailer C-17, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Gorham, Gordon T.	83 Trailer C-18, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Gorham, Florence	83 Trailer C-18, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Little, Hazel V.	83 Trailer C-20, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Little, James	83 Trailer C-20, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Little, Nancy	83 Trailer C-20, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Fatal. 4
73 Gerrish, Marion	83 Trailer C-15, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Bassett, Jennie	83 Trailer C-14, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Brown, Shirley	83 Trailer C-12, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Hannan, Vina	83 Trailer C-20, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Gerrish, John	83 Trailer C-15, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Lilley, Donald	83 Trailer C-24, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Ramsey, Roger	83 Trailer B-12, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Robertson, Ann	83 Trailer C-13, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Shedrick, Alta	83 Trailer C-14, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Conrad, Gladys	83 Unknown	Injured. 3
73 Brown, Glenys	83 Trailer C-12, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Gurney, Karen	83 Trailer C-11, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Gurney, Walter	83 Trailer C-11, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Sawtelle, Gerald	83 Trailer C-6, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3
73 Shedrick, Florence	83 Trailer C-14, 310 Westbrook St, Portland, Me.	Injured. 3

Portland Municipal Airport
Portland, Maine
12 July 1944

The following is an account of my observations in connection with the crash of the Douglas A-26-B bomber near the Portland Municipal Airport yesterday, July 11, 1944.

I was standing at the workbench in the shop on the south side of the hangar when I heard an airplane approaching from the south. I looked out the window just in time to catch a glimpse of it as it went by. It was flying very low, I would say not over 200 ft. in a northerly direction and just about over the highway that borders the west side of the airport. As the ceiling was low and the fog was coming in rapidly from the south, I was concerned about the success of the landing so I went to the doors in the front of the hangar (on the east side) to watch. The ship was out of sight northwesterly of the field. Trees and buildings obstruct the view in that direction. I could tell by following the sound of the engines that it was making a left turn and approaching to the southeast. The ceiling was variable but I would say not over 400 ft. over the field and lower to the south. The pilot did not attempt to land but flew across the field about over the northwest - southeast runway to the southeast at an altitude of 250 to 300 ft. The landing gear was still retracted. At the end of the field he started a steep right turn and almost immediately disappeared into the fog. When I last saw the plane it was in a steep bank and headed in nearly a westerly direction. As it disappeared I turned to speak to someone about the seriousness of the situation when I heard one of my mechanics, who was on the south side of the hangar, say, "He has crashed." I stepped out of the door and could see a large cloud of smoke rising from a point a short distance west of where I saw the plane enter the fog. I called to my mechanics and we boarded my beachwagon, which stood close by the front of the hangar, and rushed to the scene.

Upon arrival we found that it had crashed at the edge of a trailer camp and was completely demolished and burning vigorously and had set fire to several trailers.

By the marks in the ground it appeared to me that it struck the ground with the right wing low. The mark started at a point and widened out at about a 20° angle. There were marks where the propeller and then the engine struck the ground. A fuel tank must have burst within a very short distance of where the wing first hit the ground as gasoline was burning on the ground when I arrived.

The plane struck the ground traveling in about a southerly direction on the north side and about 50 to 60 ft. from a gully about 6 ft. deep and 30 ft. across.

There were propeller blades, an intake valve and guide, a fuel pump, a piece of steel armor plate, a piece of aluminum plate about 3/8" thick by 18" wide by 4 or 5 ft. long and other small pieces on the ground on the north side of the gully. The right wing was in the gully. There were no indications that the landing gear was down when the plane struck the ground. The remainder of the plane was demolished and scattered over a large area throughout the camp colony.

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

William V. Ellis 2nd
WILLIAM V. ELLIS, 2ND,
Major, Air Corps.

/s/ Merritt R. Roakes
Merritt R. Roakes
Chief Mechanic
Northeast Aviation Co.

11 July 1944

STATEMENT

I was sitting at my desk. Operator Hill was on the radio watching. I heard the ship call in. He had asked Portland to give him landing instructions. Hill turned to me and said, "This field is closed now, what will I do?" I told him to give him what he asked for. I went over to the mike and listened to Hill give these instructions as written.

"Hill advised the pilot that surface wind was now E 12. He suggested he use the EW runway landing to the East".

Suddenly the aircraft was seen heading south not in line with the runway but apparently over the grass about 300 feet. I saw him enter the overcast at the edge of the southern boundry. I took the microphone from the operator and immediately broadcasted to him to climb immediately to 1500 feet. The minimum safe altitude for Portland is 1500 feet. I repeated that about four times. The next thing I knew I saw some CAP pilots and mechanics out there and suddenly made a dash to the southern end of the field. A party came up stairs and said that there was a great big puff of flame down below the Trade School.

I say the plane less than a minute before the crash and it definitely was not on fire at the time I saw it. The motors sounded OK.

/s/ John J. McCarthy
JOHN J. MCCARTHY
4 Bulkeley Road
South Portland, Maine

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

William V. Ellis. 2nd
WILLIAM V. ELLIS, 2ND,
Major, Air Corps.

255

Enc #3

STATEMENT

Mr. Milton V. Smith, President, Northeast Aviation Company

My opinion in the matter is that at that particular time the ceiling was between 300 and 400 feet with visibility to the east approximately one-half mile. I feel that the pilot tried to keep sight of the airport and before he realized it, he had flown into a large fog bank that seemed to cover pretty much the south side of the airport. Instead of climbing to get on top of the fog or to an airport that was clear, he tried apparently to make a steep turn to come back directly over the airport. Unquestionably in this turn his wing tip struck the ground. That is all I know.

/s/ Milton V. Smith
Milton V. Smith

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

William V. Ellis *2nd*

WILLIAM V. ELLIS, 2ND,
Major, Air Corps.

255

Incl #4

- 6 -

EXERPS FROM DAILY COMMUNICATION REPORT

1600 McCarthy off watch. RASFO. TMH OPTG. ON HAND INBND FP
R2253. CLOSE WATCH OF WX FOR 11M. CLOCK 7 SECS SLOW.
1600 HILL ON WATCH. RMRKS NOTED. HVY QRN NOTED ALL FQCYS.
1611 RCVD EMWAR BY 1600. MNTNG CONTUS MONITORING (CONMO) AW RNC.
1629 RCVD AIWAR BW/NCO 1613. MNTNG CLOSE GUARD 3105KCS.
1641 CTCT R2253. REQG LNDG INSTRUCTIONS. FLD NOW CLOSED AT 1635.
ADVZD PW SURFACE WIND NE 12. SUGGESTED USE E-W RWY TO E.
OBSERVED SHIP PASSING OVR FLD TO W. CAC NOW ON WATCH.
1642 SHIP JUST OVR FLD RPRT CRASHED JUST SOUTH OF FLD.
1643 CALLED POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR AMBULANCE. CALLED FIRE DEPARTMENT.
ADVZD ARMY.
1648 ADVZD ATC R2253 CRASHED JUST SOUTH OF PW ARPT. TSMTD ACNOT PW.
1652 RCVD REQ FROM GFW VIA DIRECT LINE FOR 1FN RE LOCATION OF CRASH.
ADVZD SOUTH OF ARPT BETWEEN FLD AND THORNTON HEIGHTS.
1704 TSMTD PW SPL WX 1635. UNAB TSNT PREVIOUSLY DUE PW SENDING ACNOT
AND RELAYS ON CKT. CKD WITH AWO RE DLVRG SPL WX TO ATC AT TIME
OF FILING. RCVD QXT FROM LP RPRTG UNAB TO QXT CN RNC DUE QRN.
1713 TSMTD PW SPL WX 1708.
1716 TSMTD PW SPL WX 1710.

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

William V. Ellis *such*
WILLIAM V. ELLIS, 2ND,
Major, Air Corps.

ARMY AIR FORCES
AIRCRAFT CLEARANCE

OPERATIONS OFFICE	BASE OPERATIONS BRADLEY FIELD WINDSOR LOCKS, CONN.
ADDRESS	

DATE 7-11-44

PILOT'S NAME B Russell, P.I.	RANK 2LT	HOME STATION JBY	ORGANIZATION S	AIRCRAFT NUMBER 43-22253
NAME, INITIALS, RANK, HOME STATION OF OTHER OCCUPANTS				
MEFLIN, W. H. Acc (NMI) 2LT EG				
ARMY AIR FORCE REGULATION 55-3				
NOT COMPLIED WITH AT HOME				
STATION Russell 7-11-44				

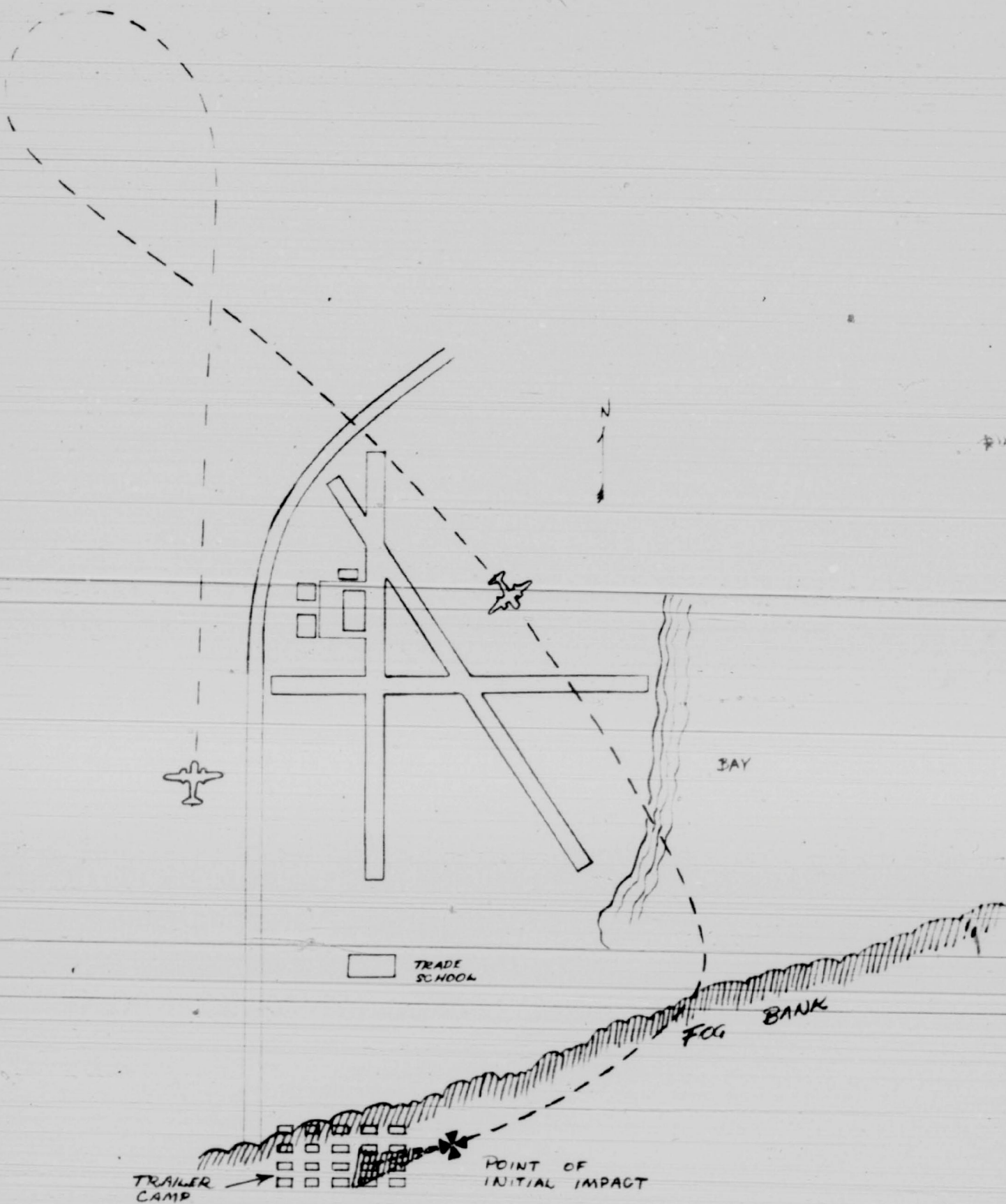
LIST ADDITIONAL PASSENGERS ON SEPARATE SHEET

C WEATHER DATA	BRADLEY (1430E) E 50 @ 5 H 55W 12	ALTIMETER SETTINGS
EXISTING ROUTE	① to ④ / 50 @ 2 1/2 - 7 miles in HAZE + smoke	LOCAL 30.00
DESTINATION (LATEST)	HAZE ALOFT (usby 2-3 mi.) up to 9 THSD FT	DESTINATION 30.07
ALTERNATE (LATEST)	PORTLAND (1430E) ① / 20 @ 8 ENE 11	ALTERNATE
FORECASTS (ESTIMATED FLIGHT TIME PLUS 2 HOURS)		RESET ALTIMETER BEFORE APPROACH
ROUTE BRADLEY-PORTLAND (1500-1830E) HIGH BRKN TO OVERCAST		
5 THSD FT. SCTD. VSBY. 3-7 miles in HAZE + smoke.		
lowering to 1 mi. in SCTD. Thunder showers. HAZE ALOFT (usby. 2-5 miles) up to 9 THSD. FT.		
DESTINATION PORTLAND (1530-1830E) HIGH BRKN. 5 THSD FT. SCTD. VSBY. 5-7 miles in HAZE + smoke. Local SCTD.		
WINDS ALOFT—GIVE ALTITUDE, DIRECTION, VELOCITY, AND PILOT REQUESTS		
4 THSD. FT. 270° - 15-20 mph rain showers (usby 1-4 mi.)		
AAF FORM 55A REQUIRED <input type="checkbox"/>	NOT REQUIRED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	FORECASTER H. W. G. Soule
		TIME 1550 E SPO

FLIGHT PLAN (PILOT COMPLETES; RADIO CALLS)		TYPE OF AIRCRAFT	PILOT (LAST NAME ONLY)	POINT OF DEPARTURE
D PLAN 2253		A-26	Russell	JBY 4
1 ALT 8000	2 ALT	3 ALT	4 ALT	
ROUTE Direct	ROUTE	ROUTE	ROUTE	
TO PORTLAND	TO	TO	TO	
AIRPORT OF FIRST INTENDED LANDING	TRUE AIR SPEED	TRANSMITTING FREQUENCIES	RECEIVER ONLY	NO RADIO
PROPOSED TAKE-OFF TIME	EST. TIME EN ROUTE	HOURS OF FUEL (CRUISE)	INSTRUMENT RATING	FLIGHT PRIORITY
REMARKS SHOW FIXES WHICH WILL BE REPORTED WHILE ON INSTRUMENT FLIGHT.				
TOWER FREQUENCIES	WEATHER CODE	TO DESTINATION	MILEAGE DEPT TO ALTERNATE	By order of COLONEL JOHNSON
DESTINATION 206 KC	ALTERNATE KC	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	150	Clearing Authority H. W. G. Soule
		COMMAND PILOT <input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR PILOT <input type="checkbox"/> CONTRACT PILOT OF CARGO AIRCRAFT <input type="checkbox"/> PILOT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

E FLIGHT CLEARANCE AUTHORIZATION			
SUBMITTED TO	TIME	BY	OPERATIONS IDENTIFICATION NO.
TIME APPROVAL RECEIVED	CONTROL INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED	By order of COLONEL JOHNSON	
		Clearing Authority H. W. G. Soule	
INSTRUCTIONS AND APPROVAL TRANSMITTED TO PILOT OR TOWER BY	ACTUAL TAKE-OFF TIME	CLEARANCE OFFICER	
	12-16		

Incl #6



M.V. ELLIS
MAY. AC

185-408711712:0930; CUT FILM 7, A268 #43 22253 CRASHED AT SOUTH PORTLAND
MAINE



185-408711712:0930; CUT FILM 7, A268 #43 22253 CRASHED AT
SOUTH PORTLAND, MAINE



185-408711712:0930; CUT FILM 7, A268 #43 22253 CRASHED AT
SOUTH PORTLAND, MAINE



185-408711712:0930; CUT FILM 7, A268 #43 22253 CRASHED AT
SOUTH PORTLAND, MAINE





RESTRICTED



HEADQUARTERS GRENIER FIELD

STATION 16, ~~MANCHESTER~~ NAD, ATC
MANCHESTER, N. H.

CO/JIM/ngb

360.33

25 July 1944.

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Report of Aircraft Accident, AAF Form No. 14.

TO : Commanding General, Flight Control Command, Winston-Salem 1,
North Carolina.

1. Transmitted herewith is Report of Aircraft Accident, AAF Form No. 14, with allied papers as listed below, on A-26B type aircraft, AF No. 43-22253, piloted by 2nd Lt. PHILIP I. RUSSELL, O-683591, of Squadron T, Barksdale Field, Louisiana, which accident occurred at South Portland, Maine, on 11 July 1944.

2. Findings and recommendations of Aircraft Accident Board are concurred in.

John I. Moore
JOHN I. MOORE,
Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding.

7 Incls:

- #1 -AAF Form 14 (3 pgs)
w/4 Photos.
- #2 -Stmt, M R Roakes, Chf
Mech, NE Avn Co.
- #3 -Stmt, J J McCarthy.
- #4 -Stmt, M V Smith, Pres,
NE Avn Co.
- #5 -Excerpts fr Daily
Communication Rpt.
- #6 -WD AAF Form 23,
Acft Clearance.
- #7 -Sketch of Runways

RESTRICTED

INCOMING MESSAGE

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES

FOR ACTION AIU

OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY

FOR INFO INTELL

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

FOR FILE

DATE 12 JULY 44



T.W.X.



TELEGRAM



ADM NET

WU 103/98 GOVT COLLECT

PORTLAND ME 12 1215A

CHIEF FLYING SAFETY ARMY AIR FORCE

11 JULY 1944 APPROX 1630 EWT ONEMILE WEST PORTLAND MAINE

PILOT SEC LT PHILIP I RUSSELL O-683591 335 BOMBARDMENT

GROUP (M) BARKSDALE FIELD LOU CRASHED INTO POPULATED AREA

IN AREA AND FOG PILOT SSEC LT PHILIP I RUSSELL O683591 FATAL

ENGINEER STAFF SGT WALLACE (NMI) MIFFLIN 39184309 FATAL

MISSION TRAINING WEATHER 500 FEET TWO MILES FOG A-26B

SERIAL NUMBER 43-22253 BARKSDALE FIELD LOU COMPLETE

WRECK FAILURE OF MATERIAL UNKNOWN DISPOSITION OF

AIRCRAFT 333RD SUB DEPOT GRENIER FIELD NEW HAMPSHIRE

DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY TWENTY FIVE TRAILER HOMES

BURNED NINE CIVILIANS KILLED TWENTY FIVE INJURED CG

AAF NOTIFIED SIGNED ELLIS

MOORE CO GRENIER FIELD

COPY
LOG NO. 1628

255

1628/13 36Z/AD

3209:6-44 OFS

45-1-11-25

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
OFFICE OF FLYING SAFETY
WINSTON-SALEM 1, N.C.

DATE

2/3/44

THIS CIRCULATION SLIP WILL REMAIN WITH AND BECOME A PART OF THE PERMANENT RECORD
INFORMAL REPLY MAY BE MADE UNDER REMARKS, ALSO ON REVERSE SIDE, TURNING BOTTOM EDGE UP

TO	FROM	INITIALS	TO	FROM	INITIALS
	CHIEF FLYING SAFETY			FLIGHT CONTROL	
	DEPUTY CHIEF, FLYING SAFETY			MEDICAL SAFETY	
	PLANS & ORGANIZATION			PREVENTION AND INVESTIGATION	
	PROGRAMS & REQUIREMENTS			SAFETY EDUCATION	
	CHIEF, BUDGET & FISCAL			ACCIDENT ANALYSIS	
	CHIEF, ENFORCEMENT BRANCH			FLYING SAFETY SQUADRON	
	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES			SUPPLY	
	PERSONNEL BRANCH			TELETYPE	
	MATERIAL & MAINTENANCE			MAIL & RECORDS	
	OFFICE SERVICES				

ACTION DESIRED:

COORDINATION	NOTE AND RETURN	SIGNATURE
FILE	REMARKS	FOR YOUR INFORMATION
NECESSARY ACTION	REPLY	FOR DISPATCH

Handwritten signature and initials

BRIFT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT
SUBMITTED BY MAJOR EDGAR R. OWEN, R. S. O.

DATE: 11 July 1944

TIME: 1642 EWT

LOCATION: $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of Portland Municipal Airport, Portland, Me.

AIRCRAFT: Type: A-26B, ASN 43-22253, No engine numbers available.
Organization: 335 Bomb Group, Barksdale Field, La.
Result: Demolished

PILOT: Russell, Philip I., 2nd Lt.
Results to crew: Fatal (2 aboard)

NARRATION OF EVENTS: The pilot left Barksdale Field the morning of 11 July 1944, for purpose of routine navigational training flight. The pilot landed at Newcastle, Del., to refuel and then took off for Bradley Field, Conn. The airplane was not serviced at Bradley as the pilot filled out Form 23 with the notation that there remained $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours fuel. The take-off at Bradley Field was accomplished at 1516 EWT on a CFR flight plan direct to Portland, Me. At the time the Form 23 was accomplished by weather officer at Bradley Field, the weather was contact at Portland, but forecasted that instrument conditions would be encountered enroute because of low visibility and scattered thunder showers. The pilot estimated one hour plus thirty minutes to cover 150 miles at a true airspeed of 240 miles per hour.

At 1635 EWT the Portland Municipal Airport sent out a teletype stating that Portland was closed because of a measured ceiling of 300 feet and $\frac{1}{2}$ miles visibility with light fog. At 1641 the pilot of the airplane in question called the Portland radio range requesting landing instructions. At this point the airplane was flying approximately 200 to 300 feet above the airport in a northerly direction. The radio range operator advised the pilot that the surface wind was now East 12 miles per hour and suggested that he use the East-West runway, landing to the East. The airplane turned to the left and headed in a Southerly direction and was last seen making a steep right turn approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile South of the airport. At that time there was a thick fog bank at this location. At 1642 the airplane crashed about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile South of the airport, immediately bursting into flames. At the point of the crash there was a large trailer camp erected for the use of shipyard employees. The airplane struck a ditch approximately 15-20 feet in the rear of this camp with such force and speed that the plane burst into flames and flew to pieces, causing the following damage: 15 civilians killed; 2 AAF personnel killed; 22 other civilians were taken to the hospital, most of whom were badly injured (4 of the 22 were treated at the hospital and released, leaving a total of 18 still confined to the hospital.)

The following is a list of property damage, excluding loss of the airplane: 17 trailers and one toilet were completely burned. One trailer 90% damaged; 5 trailers may be repaired and are badly damaged. 18 are in need of repairs due to flying parts of the airplane breaking windows, scorched by fire, etc.

INVESTIGATION DISCLOSED: This accident, due to its seriousness because of the number of civilians killed and property damage, was investigated from every possible angle, and the following discrepancies were noted:

a. As per statement inclosed, the radio range operator at Portland Municipal Airport was aware of the fact that the field was closed at the time of arrival of airplane in question and did not advise pilot that the field was below minimum landing conditions. He suggested using the East-West runway, landing to the East. Attention is invited to AAF Memorandum 55-18 which states in paragraph 1, Section b that pilots when in flight will not be told that they cannot land at such airport due to the fact that the airport has been classified as "closed" because of weather, but will be told that prevailing weather is below instrument minimums.

b. The weather officer at Bradley Field, after filling out the form 23, advised the pilot to have the operations officer file his clearance on an IFR flight plan. The operations officer did not change the clearance regardless of the fact that the weather which was reported below flight limitations for CFR was underlined in red.

c. The operations officer at Bradley did not question the fact that Portland was only 150 miles distance and that at a true airspeed of 240 miles per hour it should not take on hour and thirty minutes to cover the route, especially as the pilot stated he was flying direct.

d. The operations officer at Bradley should not have cleared this type airplane, due to its classification, to Portland Municipal Airport because this field is not an Army-Navy field, nor leased to the Army, nor are there any facilities for guards, 100 octane gasoline, or maintenance.

e. The pilot had only 5:25 total instrument time in the past six months and none in the past 30 days, which would indicate that he had no instrument training in this type airplane.

f. The pilot consumed 1:26 of his estimated 1:30 when the airspeed filed on Form 23 showed 240 miles per hour, which if met would have had him over Portland in :37. This would mean that the pilot would have reached his destination at 1553 EWT, and the weather at 1600 was still contact. It could not be determined where the pilot flew to "use up" the other :53, as no report of low flying was received in that vicinity, even though the home town of the pilot was Portland.

COMMENTS: There appears to be no engine nor structural failure on this airplane as several witnesses stated that everything sounded okay as the airplane flew over the airport. The few remaining parts of both airplane and engines were examined by representatives of the Douglas Aircraft Corp. and the Pratt & Whitney Co., who were likewise conducting their own investigations.

PROBABLE CAUSE: Pilot endeavored to make steep right hand turn, and going from contact to instrument conditions.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS: Lack of training on part of pilot for not having more instrument time on this type airplane.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF RSO: 1. Further investigation be made by higher authorities as to why this airplane was cleared from Bradley with the aforementioned discrepancies noted. Also as to why the radio operator advised the pilot to use the East-West runway.

That the Form 23 have a space allocated for the purpose of the pilot filling in

the number of hours of instrument time that he has obtained on the type of airplane for which he is filing a clearance. (This need only be for IFR Flight Plans).

3. That some provision or regulation be made that all pilots holding white instrument cards obtain a minimum of 5 hours in 6 months, either in the Link Trainer, under the hood, or actual instrument conditions.

COMMENTS OF THE INVESTIGATION BRANCH: A copy of this report is being sent to Training and Operations Division, Flying Safety, Winston-Salem, N. C., for their information and action.

BRIEFED BY

CHARLES W. FLETCHER, CAPT. AC

DATE BRIEFED: 2 August 1944

- 16 -

255

NAME OF PILOT		TYPE OF PLANE		ACCIDENT NUMBER	
CHARGED TO:	IN	CHARGED TO:	IN	CHARGED TO:	IN
<i>Russell Philip</i>		<i>A-26B</i>		<i>45-7-11-25</i>	
<i>G. M. Donald</i>	<i>4/9</i>				
<i>Mr. Polking</i>	<i>8/1</i>				
<i>W. J. Blanchard</i>	<i>11-14</i>				

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AAF

ACTION

AFS

INFO

RWX

PMP

PP

DMA

From: CO Grenier Field Manchester, N.H.

To : War Department
Headquarters ATC Gravelly Point
Office of Flying Safety Winston Salem N.C.
CO North Atlantic Wing ATC Manchester, N.H.
CO Barksdale Field, Louisiana

Nr : GFM 8525 12 July 1944

TO CG AAF, CG ATC, Chief of Flying Safety, CG NAW
ATC, CO Barksdale Field attention CO 331 base unit from
Sandow signed Moore

Crashed 11 July 1944 at 2042Z 1 mile north west of
airport at Portland Maine Pilot Phillip I Russell
2nd Lieutenant AC ASN unknown 331 Base Unit Barks-
dale Field Louisiana class 1 accident cause unknown,
Engineer Staff Sergeant Wallace Mifflin ASN unknown
organization unknown extent of injury of both pilot
and engineer not definitely known believed to be
fatal, mission navigational training. Weather in-
struments estimated 600 feet high broken lower
broken visability 2 miles and fog, serial number not
completely known 2253 only numbers available type
A2613 home station Barksdale Field La extent of dam-
age believed to be complete wreck failure of materiel
unknown desposition of aircraft unknown damage to
private property unknown aircraft cleared from Bradley
Field, Conn to Portland Me this is preliminary report
further information will be forwarded as soon as
available. AFACG notified.

End

ACTION: CG AAF
INFO : ASF

CM-IN-9438 (12 Jul 44) 1134Z

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HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
Office of Flying Safety
Winston-Salem 1, North Carolina

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MSG CEN NR: 1584

FROM: MANCHESTER, N. H.

TO: ACCIDENT ANALYSIS DIVISION

IN REPLY CITE: QFM3525

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CRASHED ONE ONE JULY ONE NINE FOUR FOUR AT TWO ZERO FOUR TWO ZEBRA ONE
MILE NORTH WEST OF AIRPORT AT PORTLAND MAINE PA EN TO CG AAF CMA CG ATC
CMA CHIEF OF FLYING SAFETY CMA CG NAV ATC CMA CO BARKSDALE FIELD ATTENTION
CO THREE THREE ONE BASE UNIT FROM SANDOW STATED TO THE PILOT PHILLIP
F RUSSELL SECOND LIEUTENANT AG ASN UNKNOWN THREE THREE ONE BASE UNIT
BARKSDALE FIELD LOUISIANA CLA S ONE ACCIDENT CAUSE UNKNOWN CMA ENGINEER
STAFF SERGEANT WALLACE MEEFLIN ASN UNKNOWN ORGANIZATION UNKNOWN EXTENT
OF INJURY OF BOTH PILOT AND ENGINEER NOT COMPLETELY KNOWN BELIEVED TO BE
FATAL CMA MISSION NAVAGATIONAL TRAINING STOP WEATHER INSTRUMENTS ESTIMATED
SIX ZERO ZERO FEET HIGH BROKEN LOWER BROKEN VISIBILITY TWO MILES AND FOG
CMA SERIAL NUMBER NOT COMPLETELY KNOWN TWO TWO FIVE THREE ONLY NUMBERS
AVAILABLE TYPE A TWO SIX B HOME STATION BARKSDALE FIELD LA EXTENT OF
DAMAGE BELIEVED TO BE COMPLETE WRECK FAILURE OF MATERIEL UNKNOWN DESPOSI-
TION OF AIRCRAFT UNKNOWN DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY UNKNOWN AIRCRAFT

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Office of Flying Safety
Winston-Salem 1, North Carolina

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DATE RECD:
MSG CEN NR:

FROM:

TO:

IN REPLY CITE:

PAGE NR: 2

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CLEARED FROM BRADLEY FIELD CMA CONN TO PORTLAND RE THIS IS PRELIMINARY
REPORT FURTHER INFORMATION WILL BE FORWARDED AS SOON AS AVAILABLE RD
AFACG RPT AFACG NOTIFIED

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Date

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Analyzed by

Copied for Wright

Field by

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1225:9-43

Photostat sent to Wright Field Aug 9, 1944
" " " Air Corps 5 Sept 44 255