

Accident No. 43-65-12

Date

Checked by W. J. [unclear] 6/30/43Analyzed by W. J. [unclear]Copied for Wright  
Field by

Notes

(Nature Group <sup>02</sup> Collision in full flight(Specific Nature <sup>05</sup> Collision in full flight(Underlying Nature <sup>00</sup> UndeterminedCause Group <sup>31</sup> 100% UndeterminedSpecific Cause <sup>12</sup> No definite conclusionsUnderlying Cause <sup>00</sup> Undetermined

388:6-13

B-26-B

WAR DEPARTMENT  
A. A. F. FORM NO. 14  
(Revised May 15, 1942)

WAR DEPARTMENT  
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

ACCIDENT NO.

043

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place Jersey, Georgia. (2) Date June 5, 1943 (3) Time 15:45 EWT  
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model P-26B (5) A. F. No. 41-17781 (6) Station Myrtle Beach Bombing Range  
Organization: (7) 111 Bomb Third (8) 391st Bomb (9) 573rd Bomb Sq. (M)  
(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)
01 P	Barkhurst, George R.	P	0-664122	2nd Lt	01	Air Corps	Third	Fatal	4 None
04 CP	Pross, Phillip J.	P	0-735658	2nd Lt	01	Air Corps	Third	Fatal	4 None
61 BN	Holmes, Benjamin L.	BN	0-729971	1st Lt	01	Air Corps	Third	Fatal	4 None
✓ E	Maki, William G.	E	36196893	S/Sgt	38 20	Air Corps	Third	Fatal	4 None
71 RG	Maurer, William J.	R	37419348	S/Sgt	38 20	Air Corps	Third	Fatal	4 None
70 F	Engel, Leibel I.	F	35569140	Cpl	38 20	Air Corps	Third	Fatal	4 None



JUN 21 11:30 AM

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) Barkhurst, George R. (21) 0-664122 (22) 2nd Lt (23) 01 (24) Air Corps  
(Name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)  
Assigned (25) 111 Bomb Third (26) 391st Bomb (27) 573rd Bomb Sq. (28) Myrtle Beach Bombing  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station) Range  
Attached for flying (29) 111 Bomb Third (30) 391st Bomb (31) 573rd Bomb (32) Myrtle Beach Bombing  
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station) Range  
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 9/6/42 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 9/6/42 Instrument rating (37) 3/10/43  
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type 331 (39) This model 110 (40) Last 90 days 164 (41) Total 335  
(42) Instrument time last 6 months 18 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 36 (44) Night time last 6 months 00 (45) Night time last 30 days 24

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(46)	(47)	(48)
(46) Aircraft	W 5	W 5	W 5
(47) Engine(s)	W 5	W 5	W 5
(48) Propeller(s)	W 5	W 5	W 5

(49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS

(50) Weather at the time of accident CAVU 00  
(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No  
(52) Cleared from Myrtle Beach (53) To Atlanta Georgia (54) Kind of clearance CFR-altitude 200'  
(55) Pilot's mission Cross country navigation.  
(56) Nature of accident Crash - Flew into ground while operating at low altitude.

(57) Cause of accident Unknown. It is the opinion of this committee after a thorough investigation of the accident, that the pilot failed to see the hill in time to gain sufficient altitude to clear it.

RESTRICTED

10-28767-1



## DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

On June 5, 1943 at approximately 1545 EWT, B-26B airplane, AF No. 41-17781 pilot 2nd. Lt. George R. Barkhurst, crashed and burned three miles South of Jersey, Georgia, fatally injuring all occupants of the airplane.

The pilot had been flying at a low altitude, estimated by various observers at from 20' to 50', for at least eight miles prior to the point of the crash. Immediately prior to the accident the ship was flying up a slight draw and passed over a house 1/8 of a mile behind which was a hill. The tail and both propellers of the plane struck this hill 150 feet from the top, the ship bounced into the air and the left engine stopped. Parts of the airplane were strewn from this point to the point of rest of the airplane. The plane hit the ground again 800' from first point of impact and right engine stopped. Ship bounced again and skidded along ground for 770' and fuselage broke just forward of upper gun turret, 25' before point of rest. Both engines apparently left ship at this point and wing and rest of fuselage then made a 210' turn to right and came to rest, on fire. Ship caught fire after first bounce and gasoline exploded when it hit the second time. Fire continued until burned out. Persons arriving at the scene were unable to rescue any of the men trapped in the wreck because of the fire. Statements of all witnesses and prop marks on ground indicate that both engines and airplane were functioning normally at time of accident. An examination of wreckage accounted for all control surfaces in proper place on aircraft or within 150' of point of rest.

There was no evidence that would indicate sabotage. Witnesses state that there was a change in the attitude of the airplane just prior to the accident indicating that the pilot tried to gain altitude suddenly, which, connected with the first marks on the ground when the ship hit, leads to the belief that the ship mashed into the hill.

There is insufficient evidence to place the direct responsibility for this accident. However, it is the opinion of this committee that it was due to the pilot's failing to see the hill in time to change altitude fast enough or to his misjudging the altitude of the hill.

Signature

FRANCIS D. SHOEMAKER, Major, A. C.

MORGAN R. HARRISON, 1st. Lt., A. C.

Date June 16, 1943.

Route # 3,  
Covington, Georgia.  
June 6, 1943.

## STATEMENT

At approximately 1545 LMT, June 5, 1943 a B-26B airplane, No. 41-17781, crashed and burned on the property of T. J. Adams, who makes the following statement:

"I was sitting on my veranda and I saw a big airplane flying low, and it hit a hill near my house and it started burning and it kept coming toward me. Then it exploded and the motors flew off the airplane. I ran out of my house and then the cartridges commenced popping. Three other fellows and myself went and pulled one of the fellows away from the plane to keep him from burning any more. He was thrown from the plane when it exploded. There was a dog thrown out also when it exploded and he was lying a few yards away from this fellow. The airplane burned about seven or eight hours. About 7:00 PM, a Red Cross ambulance came out from Atlanta to get the bodies."

T. J. Adams. X

T. J. ADAMS,  
Route #3,  
Covington, Georgia.

witness

Jimmie McEwan

Lagoville, La.

R. F. D 3

Morris Canner

Lagoville, La.



RFD #3,  
Covington, Ga.  
June 6, 1943.

STATEMENT

At 1545 EDT, June 5, 1943, a B-26B airplane, No. 41-17781 crashed and burned three miles south of Jersey, Georgia and the following statement is submitted by Clifton H. Casper:

"Mr. Hamby called my attention to the plane and I looked out of the window of my house. When I first saw the plane it was about a half mile away coming from east to west. The weather was clear at the time. The plane did not appear to be in any trouble. The engines were both apparently running very smoothly. The plane was not on fire until after it hit the ground. Then I saw dust and smoke and flame after bouncing in the air. The plane hit the ground towards the top of the hill and bounced into the air again. When the plane hit and bounced, there was a huge cloud of dust and smoke and the plane caught on fire and disappeared over the hill. I did not see anybody try to get out of the plane before the crash. I saw that it was a two-motored plane as it was coming over. Mr. Hamby and I went immediately to the scene of the crash. We saw parts of the airplane strewn around and we pulled one man away from the fire. We could not reach any other persons in the wreckage because of the intense heat. The crash occurred on the property of Mr. Claude T. Wiley of Social Circle, Georgia and Mr. T. J. Adams, RFD #3, Covington, Georgia."

*Clifton H. Casper*  
CLIFTON H. CASPER  
RFD #3,  
Covington, Georgia

RFD #3,  
Covington, Georgia.  
June 6, 1943.

## STATEMENT

At approximately 1545 AWT, June 5, 1943, a B-26B airplane, No. 41-17781 crashed and burned three miles south of Jersey, Georgia, and the following statement is submitted by D. W. Hamby;

" At approximately 3:45 PM, June 5, 1943, I was attracted by a plane coming over the swamp in front of a house about a half mile away. The plane did not appear to be in any trouble when I first saw it and there was no indication of any apparent motor trouble, though it was flying low and just missed a house. The weather at the time was clear and could not attribute to the crash. I saw it hit a hill and I saw a big cloud of dust, and then there was a cloud of smoke and flame and the plane disappeared over the hill. I could not distinguish whether pilot or passengers attempted to get out of the plane, nor could I distinguish the type of plane or any other identification. After it started burning there was a lot of shooting going and I was sort of dubious about going any further, then after hesitating about a minute, I went on thinking I could maybe help someone, but the fire was too intense, but did manage to pull one man free of flames. Mr. Clifton H. Casper was also with me at the time of the crash and did not notice any of the wreckage disturbed prior to the arrival of Army personnel."

*D. W. Hamby*  
D. W. HAMBY,  
RFD #3,  
Covington, Georgia.



June 5, 1943.  
RFD #1,  
Social Circle, Ga.

## STATEMENT

At approximately 1545 EWT, June 5, 1943, a B-26B airplane, No. 41-17781, crashed and burned three miles south of Jersey, Georgia. The following statement is submitted in reference to the above named accident:

"I was on the Union Chapel, Social Circle highway about 3:00 PM, or shortly thereafter June 5, 1943. I saw a two-engine airplane flying at an altitude I estimate to be forty or fifty feet. This ship was heading in the direction of Atlanta. I watched the ship for several minutes and it appeared to go underneath the high voltage lines at one point between Tullula Falls and Jackson. The altitude at this point, I estimate was thirty-five or forty feet. I was between one-half and three-quarters of a mile away at that time. The ship was apparently in no trouble, and both engines appeared to be functioning smoothly. I saw no fire or no smoke come from the airplane and saw no persons attempt to leave the airplane. When I reached the Monroe-Social Circle highway, a few minutes later, I saw a cloud of smoke off to my right. It billowed up and was very black and it seemed to die down and then billowed up again. It had the appearance of a gasoline fire. It is my belief that this was smoke coming from the bomber crash. The point from where I first saw the bomber is about six miles from the scene of the accident."

*Cliff Rogers*  
CLIFF ROGERS  
RFD #1,  
Social Circle, Ga.

Monroe, Georgia, Friday, June 11, 1943.

## ARMY PLANE CRASHES IN THIS COUNTY

**SIX DIE AS SHIP  
PLOWS INTO GROUND  
NEAR CORNISH MTN.**

A twin-motored Army bomber last Saturday afternoon crashed in the southwestern part of Walton county, carrying six men to their deaths.

About the middle of the afternoon, the large plane was observed by residents of Social Circle, as it was flying extremely low over that city. A few miles to the west, within a mile of the Newton county line, the plane plummeted into the ground and burned.

One of the plane's personnel was thrown clear, as was a large dog, described as being of the German Police breed. The other five men were so badly burned as to be unrecognizable, it was reported.

J. Booth Williams, well-known Monroe business man, and Jim House, Tribune employe, visited the scene within an hour or so following the mishap, and both reported that the plane's impact with the earth must have been terrific.

"One of the motors was catapulted straight forward about a hundred feet, and another motor was flung even further, at an angle from the craft. The wings were torn from the fuselage, and the man who was tossed out was laying between one of the wings and the main body of the plane," Mr. Williams said.

"If the plane had traveled onward a few hundred more feet, it would have crashed right into a farm home. As it was, it came to a stop across the road directly in front of another house.

"Undoubtedly every one of the men was instantly killed, since the plane must have been traveling over 200 miles an hour," Mr. Williams added.

The plane, which was en route from Myrtle Beach, S. C., to Atlanta, contained the following crew members, according to Army reports from that base:

Second Lieut. George R. Barkhurst, Dallas, Tex.; Second Lieut. Philip J. Props, Lafayette, Ind.; First Lieut. Benjamin L. Holmes, San Francisco, Calif.; Staff Sgt. William G. Maki, Atlantic Mine, Mich.; Staff Sgt. William J. Maurer, Spencer, Iowa, and Cpl. Leibel Engle, Indianapolis, Ind.

Sunday, June 6, 1943—The Atlanta Constitution—

## Bomber Crash Fatal to Six Near Covington

Six men were killed when a two-motored Army plane, which had attracted considerable attention by flying low, crashed into the side of a hill near Alcovy, a short distance from Covington, late yesterday afternoon.

Immediately following the crash, the plane caught fire, and the bodies of four of the men aboard the plane were burned beyond recognition.

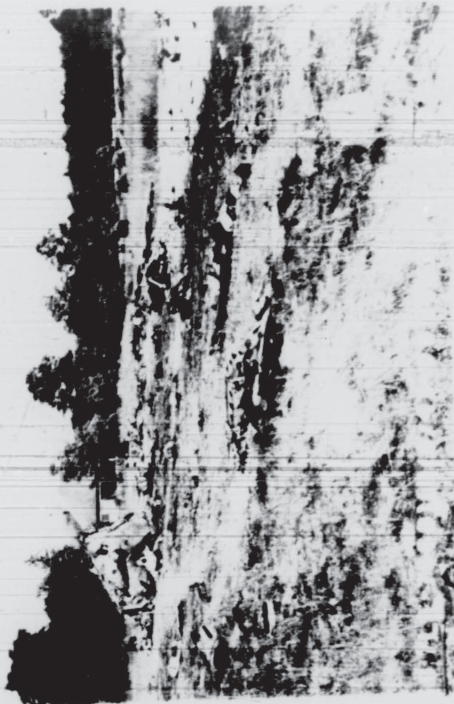
A number of persons saw the crash, while scores of reports were received by Newton county officials that the plane was "hedge-hopping" just prior to the crash. At nearby Bostwick, witnesses said they saw the plane fly under a high tension power line suspended about 50 feet above the ground.

The plane came from the direction of Augusta, Newton county officials said.

Military authorities in both Atlanta and Augusta were immediately notified of the crash and investigators hastened to the scene.

Names of those aboard the plane could not be obtained last night, Newton county officials said.





(6720-7263)(6/6/43-09-00103/1)



6730-7568)(6/6/43-0900)(6/6-30348

HEADQUARTERS ATLANTA ARMY AIR BASE  
ARMY AIRPORT, ATLANTA, GEORGIA.

WJA/vdm.

June 16, 1943.

SUBJECT: A. A. F. Form No. 14.

TO: Commanding General,  
Army Air Forces,  
Washington, D. C.

1. Inclosed herewith is the A. A. F. Form No. 14 (Report of Aircraft Accident) covering accident of B-26B airplane, serial number 41-17781, piloted by 2nd Lt. George R. Barkhurst, A. C. Accident occurred at Jersey, Georgia, on June 5, 1943.

2. Duplicate copy forwarded to: Commanding General, Third Air Force, Tampa, Florida.

3. Triplicate copy forwarded to: Commanding Officer, AAF Bombing & Gunnery Range, Myrtle Beach, S. C.

For the Commanding Officer:

*John E. Cienki*  
JOHN E. CIENKI,  
2nd Lt., AGD.,  
Adjutant.

1 Incl:  
A. A. F. Form No. 14.



HEADQUARTERS ATLANTA ARMY AIR BASE  
ARMY AIRPORT, ATLANTA, GEORGIA.

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SUBJECT: A. A. F. Form No. 14.

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For the Commanding Officer:

*John E. Cienki*  
JOHN E. CIENKI,  
2nd Lt., AGD.,  
Adjutant.

1 Incl:  
A. A. F. Form No. 14.

ARMY AIR FORCES  
HEADQUARTERS FLIGHT CONTROL COMMAND

For Action ATU  
For Info. CS  
For File 1&2

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

DATE 6-7-43



T. W. X.



TELEGRAM



RADIO

INCOMING  
MESSAGE NO. MSG 3

MSG 3 ARL 234 JUNE 7/43

ARMY AIR FORCE ATLANTA GA 6 519Z

COMMANDING GENERAL U S ARMY AIR FORCES WASHINGTON D C

ATLANTA GA 5 JUNE 1515 T T 3 MILES SOUTH OF JERSEY GEORGIA PILOT

GEORGE R B RESIDENT SECOND LIEUTENANT AR THIRD AF WYOMING SOUTH

CAROLINA WYOMING PILOT FATAL CO PILOT WILLIAM J XXXXXXXXXXXXX RO S SECOND

LIEUTENANT AR THIRD AF BOMBARDIER BENJAMINE L HOLMES 1ST LIEUTENANT AR

THIRD AF ENGINEER WILLIAM G XXXXXXXXX S SGT UNKNOWN THIRD AF

RADIO OPERATOR WILLIAM J MAURER S SGT UNKNOWN THIRD AF PHOTOGRAPHER

LESTER I ENGEL CORPORAL UNKNOWN THIRD AF ALL ABOVE PROVED FATAL

NAVIGATION CAVI 41-17781 B-26B WYOMING BEACH CO AIRPLANE COMPLETE TRACK

UNKNOWN SALVAGE U S AFACR NOTIFIED

SUBMITTER CC A P

REC'D IN AAF MSG SENT 061331Z

REC'D IN AFREC JUNE 7 0851

RELEASED TO TFC 071000

BL 1009

**MASTER COPY**

3135-43



ARMY AIR FORCES  
 HEADQUARTERS FLIGHT CONTROL COMMAND  
 WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA  
 DATE 6/6/43

For Action ATH  
 For Info. CS  
 For File MR

☒ T. W. X. ☐ TELEGRAM ☐ RADIO

INCOMING  
 MESSAGE NO. MSG 15 ARL 234 JUNE 6/43

MYRTLEBEACH SC 060240Z

COMMANDING GENERAL ARMY AIR FORCES WASHINGTON D C

391 BG UO30A PERIOD MYRTLE BEACH BOMBING RANGE CQIA SOC ROBIN

A 6-5-43 PERSEY CO GA GEORGIA

B BARKHURST, GEORGE R SECOND LT ORC 3AF MYRTLEBEACH SC

C UNKNOWN

D PILOT GEORGE R BARKHURST SECOND LIEUTENANT ORC 3AF FATAL

CO PILOT BJ PROPS SECOND LIEUTENANT AUS 3AF FATAL

BOMB-NAV BENJAMIN L HOLMS 1ST LT AUS AAF FATAL

ENGINEER WILLIAM G HOLMS MAINT STAFF SERGEANT AUS AC 3AF FATAL

RADIO OPERATOR WILLIAM J MAURER STAFF AUS AC 3AF FATAL

PHOTO LEIBEL I ENGEL CORPORAL AUS AC 3AF FATAL

E CROSS COUNTRY NAVIGATION

F CLEAR VISIBILITY UNLIMITED CEILING 5500 BROKEN

G B-26B AC NO 41-17781

H MYRTLEBEACH SOUTH CAROLINA

I CRASHED AND BURNED

J UNKNOWN

K TURNED OVER TO WARNER ROBINS SUB-DEPOT MACON GEORGIA L NONE

WILLIAMS COBOMGR 391

RECD IN AAF MSG CNT 060527Z

RECD IN AF FC 061502 EMT

RELEASED TO TX 061515 EMT

LM 061515 EMT

**MASTER COPY**

313:5-43

ARMY AIR BASE ALMATA OK 6 519A

COMMANDING GENERAL ARMY AIR FORCES WASH DC

ATL US 55 5 JUNE 15:45 LMT 3 MILES SOUTH OF JERSEY GEORGIA. PILOT GEORGE R

BARKJURSE SECOND LIEUTENANT AR THIRD AF MYRTLEBEACH SOUTH CAROLINA. UNKNOWN.

PILOT WEL. CO-PILOT PHILIP J PROPS SECOND LIEUTENANT AR THIRD AF BOMBARDIER

BOMBARDIER L ROBERTS 1ST LIEUTENANT AR THIRD AF ENGINEER WILLIAM G. MAKI S/SGT UNKNOWN

THIRD AF. RADIO OPERATOR WILLIAM J MAUSER S/SGT UNKNOWN THIRD AF PHOTOGRAPHER

LEONARD I SINGLE CORPORAL UNKNOWN THIRD AF. ALL ABOVE PROVED FATAL. NAVIGATION

CAU. 41 17781 B-26B MYRTLE/ BEACH SC AIRLAND COMPLETELY CRACK. UNKNOWN.

SILVER. YES. REACH NOTIFIED

SHOMAKER CO AFB.

RECD IN AAF HESG CMT 061331Z

TV#

DISTRIBUTION

AFIT (3cyps)

AFDP (4cyps)

AFAC

AFDB-2

AFBO

AFSC

AFM2D

AFRTW (2cyps)

AFAS

AFAG

TAG

AFDB

DIR. FLYING SAFETY  
HQ. A.A.F.

JUN 9 43 PM



**RECEIVED**  
HQ. AAF, DIRECTOR  
OF FLYING SAFETY



MYRTLE BEACH SC 060340Z "1"

COMMANDEER GENERAL ARMY AIR FORCES WASHINGTON D C

391 00 UOZOA MYRTLE BEACH BOMBING RANGE COMMA SO CAROLINA

A. 4-5-43 JERRY Y COMMA GEORGIA

B. BANGHURST, GEORGE R SECOND LT ORC 3AF MYRTLE BEACH S C

C. UNKNOWN

D. PILOT GEORGE R. BANGHURST SECOND LIEUTENANT ORC 3AF FATAL

CO PILOT WJ. PROPS SECOND LIEUTENANT AUS 3AF FATAL

ENGINEER WILLIAM G. HOLMS 1ST LT AUS 3AF FATAL

ENGINEER WILLIAM G. HOLMS MAKI STAFF SERGEANT AUS AC 3AF FATAL

RADIO OPERATOR WILLIAM J. MAURER STAFF SERGEANT AUS AC 3AF FATAL

PHOTO ENGINEER I. SMALL CORPORAL AUS AC 3AF FATAL

E. CROSS COUNTRY NAVIGATION

F. CLEAR VISIBILITY UNLIMITED CEILING 5500 BROCK IN

G. B-26B AC NO 41-17781

H. MYRTLE BEACH SOUTH CAROLINA

I. CRASHED AND BURNED

J. UNKNOWN

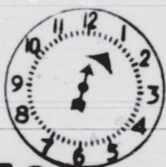
K. TURNED OVER TO WARNER ROBINS SUB DEPOT MACON GEORGIA

L. NONE

WILLIAMS COMBING 391

REC'D IN AAF MSGS CENT: 060537Z  
P.S.

MIN 9 43 PM



**RECEIVED**  
HQ. AAF, DIRECTOR  
OF FLYING SAFETY

DISTRIBUTION

AFMIP (2cys)	AFMBO
AFDPS (2cys)	AFMBC
AFAS	AFMAD-2
AFMIC	AFRTW (2cys)
AFDPS-2	AFMAG
	AFMAG

HQ. A.A.F.  
DIR. FLYING SAFETY

1943 JUN 6 PM 3 02

RECEIVED