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WAR DEPARTMENT
A. A. F. Form No. 14
(Revised May 15, 1942)

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AAF STATION A-73
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

Accident No. 43-12-11-509

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place Five (5) miles west of AAF Station A-73 (2) Date 11 December 1944 (3) Time 1230

Aircraft: (4) Type and model B-26G (5) A. F. No. 43-34183 (6) Station A-73

Organization: (7) 9th BD, Ninth AF (8) 391st Bomb (Group) (9) 573rd Bomb (Squadron)
(Command and Air Force)

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	Clapham, Lloyd M.	P	0-690051	1st Lt	18	AC	Ninth AF	Fatal	"U"
CP	Doebler, Reuben I.	P	0-818274	2nd Lt	18	AC	Ninth AF	Minor	"S"
BN	O'Neil, Ralph W.	B	0-712212	2nd Lt	18	AC	Ninth AF	Minor	"S"
RG	Coe, William J.	RG	13157796	T/Sgt	21	AC	Ninth AF	Minor	"S"
EG	Fowler, Clarence A.	EG	38503045	S/Sgt	21	AC	Ninth AF	Minor	"S"
AG	Tomlinson, Billie F.	AG	38445151	S/Sgt	21	AC	Ninth AF	Minor	"S"
N	Motley, William F.	N	0-699227	1st Lt	18	AC	Ninth AF	Minor	"S"

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) Clapham (Last name) Lloyd (First name) M. (Middle initial) (21) 0-690051 (Serial number) (22) 1st Lt (Rank) (23) 18 (Personnel class) (24) AC (Branch)

Assigned (25) 9 B.D. Ninth AF (Command and Air Force) (26) 391st Bomb (Group) (27) 573rd Bomb (Squadron) (28) A-73 (Station)

Attached for flying (29) 9 B.D. Ninth AF (Command and Air Force) (30) 391st Bomb (Group) (31) 573rd Bomb (Squadron) (32) A-73 (Station)

Original rating (33) Pilot (Rating) (34) 8-30-43 (Date) Present rating (35) Pilot (Rating) (36) 8-30-43 (Date) Instrument rating (37) 2-15-44 (Date)

First Pilot Hours:
(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type	217:05	(42) Instrument time last 6 months	7:20
(39) This model	33:20	(43) Instrument time last 30 days	1:00
(40) Last 90 days	49:00	(44) Night time last 6 months	4:05
(41) Total	~~217:05~~	(45) Night time last 30 days	2:50

Total Flying Time 672:50

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

Damage				(49) List of Damaged Parts
(46) Aircraft	W			Total loss
(47) Engine(s)	W	W		
(48) Propeller(s)	W	W		

(50) Weather at the time of accident Visibility three (3) miles - 7/10 to 9/10 clouds - Bases at 2500 ft.

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

(52) Cleared from A-73 (53) To A-73 (54) Kind of clearance Operational

(55) Pilot's mission Combat bombing.

(56) Nature of accident Crashed into ground - Left engine afire

(57) Cause of accident Specific cause unknown - left engine caught fire after aircraft was airborne.

(58) Has form 54 been submitted: No

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED OR CHANGED,
TO ~~RESTRICTED~~
BY AUTHORITY OF
BY S.R.C. DATE 1-29-46

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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

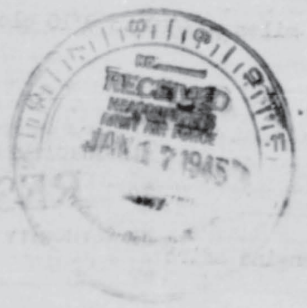
1. After take-off and assembly on the mission of 11 December 1944, the left engine of Lt Clapham's aircraft, a B-26G1, A. F. No. 43-34183, burst into flames and failed. The aircraft crashed after being abandoned by the crew. The pilot was killed.

It is impossible for the board to determine the reason for the fire. It could have been materiel failure or pilot error (handling of engine controls).

It is further impossible for the board to determine whether the pilot's parachute failed or whether he was injured in abandoning ship and recovered at too low an altitude. The rip cord had been pulled (was in his left hand) and the pilot chute was clear. After a further investigation of the pilot's parachute, by competent parachute personnel, there is no apparent reason why the parachute should have failed to function, had it been operated properly. With the facts on hand, the board is led to believe that the pilot was injured when he abandoned the airplane.

2. Cause: Specific cause undeterminable.

3. Recommendations: None.



Signature Donald K. Brandon
(Investigating Officer)
DONALD K. BRANDON, Lt Col, AC

Ernest N. Ljungren
ERNEST N. LJUNGREN, Lt Col, AC

James A. Sullens
JAMES A. SULLENS, Lt Col, AC

Date 20 December 1944.

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573RD BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON AAF
Office of the Operations Officer
AAF Station A-73

December 13, 1944

CO-PILOT'S STATEMENT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT:

1. I was riding co-pilot on B-26 ap #43-34183 on mission 11 December 1944. Shortly after take-off I received a call that our left engine was on fire. I called the engineer up front to check the engine. Before he could check, the engine sputtered and failed. I checked the engine instruments prior to the engine failing, and found them to be within the requirements except for the carburetor-air temperature, which was at the bottom of the instrument. The pilot then called bail out, and I left the seat to clear the way for the bombardier. I was the third to jump, that was the last contact with the ship.

Reuben I. Doebler.

REUBEN I. DOEBLER
2nd Lt, AC
Co-Pilot.

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573RD BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON AAF
Office of the Operations Officer
AAF Station A-73

December 13, 1944

STATEMENT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT:

1. I was flying as bombardier in B-26 ay #43-34183 on mission 11 December 1944 in lead position of high flight. Shortly after take-off, having reached an altitude of approximately 3500', the left engine was reported to be on fire by one of the wing-men. Our co-pilot was calling the engineer forward to check engine when engine coughed and quit. The pilot called "bail out" and rang alarm bell. We had looked out to see if we could see any fire, but no flames or smoke could be seen from the nose. After bailing out, I watched plane fly on and the left engine seemed to burst into flames before the plane hit the ground. The wing man said flames and smoke shot out ventilator on top of engine, then seemed to just melt away rear of engine nacelle.

Ralph W. O'Neil

RALPH W. O'NEIL
2nd Lt, AC
Bombardier

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573RD BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (M) AAF
Office of the Engineering Officer.

15 December 1944

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident.

TO : Operations Officer, 391st Bombardment Group (M) AAF, Station A-73.

1. It is my opinion that the fire in the left engine of airplane B-26 G1, serial #43-34183 was caused by the engine being operated on a leaner mixture than normal.

2. This could have been caused by taking off with the carburetor air heat in the, "Hot position", or by leaning the mixture out manually from the cockpit.

3. A ruptured diaphragm in the carburetor between chambers A and B could have also caused the condition, however it is very remote due to the short time the carburetor had been in service.

RAYMOND J. HARRELL,
Captain, Air Corps,
Engineering Officer.

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HEADQUARTERS
AAF STATION A-73

1-11184
G-GB-1

APO 140, U S Army
20 December 1944

SUBJECT: Report of Aircraft Accident, A. F. No. 43-34183.

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

1. Transmitted herewith WD AAF Form No. 14, Report of Aircraft Accident, in accordance with par. 2, Memo 62-2, IX Bomber Command, dated 18 April 1944.

For the Commanding Officer:

Glenn E. Bowen

GLENN E. BOWEN
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Adjutant.

5-Incls:
1-WD AAF Form No. 14. (Quad)
2-Statement of Co-Pilot.
3-Statement of Bombardier.
4-Statement of Engineering Officer.
5-Photos

HQ AAF
13 JAN 1945
CLASSIFIED MAIL SECTION

360.33 1st Ind. E-Q-3
HEADQUARTERS 9TH BOMBARDMENT DIVISION (M), APO 140, U. S. ARMY, 30 December 1944.

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:

4542

C. C. VEGA, Jr.
LT. COLONEL, A.C.
ADJUTANT GENERAL.

5 Incls: n/c (1 cy ea w/d)

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360.33 2nd Ind. E-PJM-3
HEADQUARTERS NINTH AIR FORCE, APO 696, US Army, 5 January 1945.

(6)

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

AFS

Report of Aircraft Accident Committee approved.

For the Commanding General:

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

5 Incls: n/c (2 cys ea w/d)

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