

Accident No.

45-12-22-500

Date

Checked by

Analyzed by

Siska

Copied for Wright

Field by

Notes

~~Medical Safety Division~~

1225:9-43

Accident No. 45 12 22 8

Date

Checked by [Signature] 1 20 95

Analyzed by _____

Copied for Wright
Field by _____

Notes _____

3989:10-0475

CONFIDENTIAL
RESTRICTED

ACCIDENT No. _____

WAR DEPARTMENT

U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

1-17-45

9

549220
Cablegram A9

45-42-22-570
0

(1) Place Valley, North Wales. (2) Date 22 December 1944 (3) Time 17:19 Local
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B24 (5) A. F. No. 42-51232 (6) Station AAF F-113
Organization: (7) 8th AF (8) _____ (9) 36th Bomb Squadron
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

UNIT	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)
P	Boehm, Harold T.	P	0-701870	1st Lt.	18	AC	8th AF	N	Yes
CP	Burch, Donald, W.	C	0-704662	2nd Lt.	18	AC	8th AF	N	Yes
AF	Lehner, William S.	N	0-717232	2nd Lt.	18	AC	8th AF	MIA	Yes
RE	Clemens, Arthur R.	AE	33504740	S/Sgt.	38	AC	8th AF	MIA	Yes
RO	Nystrom, Harvey N.	RO	37165741	T/Sgt.	38	AC	8th AF	MIA	Yes
RO	Lynch, Francis J.	RO	19006149	S/Sgt.	20	AC	8th AF	MIA	Yes
AG	Zapotocky, Andrew	AG	12053185	Sgt.	20	AC	8th AF	MIA	Yes
AG	Cagene, Robert F.	AG	38318367	Sgt.	38	AC	8th AF	MIA	Yes
AG	Fonseca, Jaine (NMI)	AG	31292851	Sgt.	38	AC	8th AF	MIA	Yes
AG	Dautel, Charles H.	AG	37705000	Sgt.	38	AC	8th AF	MIA	Yes

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) Boehm Harold T. (21) 0-701870 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 18 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned (25) 8th AF (26) _____ (27) 36th Bomb Sqn. (28) AAF F-113
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) 8th AF (30) _____ (31) 26th Bomb Sqn. (32) AAF F-113
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station) 7163
Original rating (33) P (34) 12-5-43 Present rating (35) P (36) 12-5-43 Instrument rating (37) 5-8-44
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident) O.R. - T.O. - 1
(38) This type 385:10 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 9:30
(39) This model 260:00 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 8:30
(40) Last 90 days 262:00 (44) Night time last 6 months 117:00
(41) Total 650:00 (45) Night time last 30 days 66:00

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

props - NF
DAMAGE CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED OR CHANGED.
(46) Aircraft 4 (49) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(47) Engine(s) 4 TO **RESTRICTED**
(48) Propeller(s) 4 BY AUTHORITY OF CG AAF
BY FAC DATE 2-7-46
(50) Weather at the time of accident Ceiling 4-6/10 cloud coverage 500 ft. with an overcast of from 1500 ft. visibility 1800 yds. caused by light fog.
(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident Yes when "Ball Out order was given"
(52) Clear from Manston (53) To Cheddington-Atcham Valley Kind of clearance No Clearance filed; Instrument conditions prevailed.
(55) Pilot's mission Operational

(56) Nature of accident Crew abandoned aircraft.

(57) Cause of accident Exhaustion of fuel supply.

(58) Is form 54 attached: No.

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DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

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

The flight of Seven B24's of which B24J 42-51232 was member, landed at Manston upon the completion of a combat mission. The flight remained at Manston for several days awaiting weather and instructions to return to Cheddington, their home station. These instructions were received on 22 December, 1944. The flight became airborne at approximately 1330 hours local time. Each aircraft had been "topped off" to 1000 gallons of fuel. Because the weather at Cheddington was expected to become marginal at the time the flight was due to arrive; Flying Control Cheddington made arrangements to divert the flight to Valley should it become necessary. These arrangements were made at 1345 hours local time, at which time Valley weather was reporting 7/10 cloud coverage at 1200 feet and an overcast of 2000 feet, visibility 2200 yards. When the flight arrived at Cheddington, the field was closed. The flight was then diverted to Atcham. Upon arriving at Atcham, at approximately 1600 hours local time; four of the seven aircraft were able to land successfully. At 1655 hours local time Flying Control Valley was advised by Atcham that the remaining three aircraft in the flight were being diverted to Valley. Among these three aircraft was B24J 42-51232, using call sign "Marker Jig". The aircraft's E.T.A. at Valley was 1730 hours local time. By this time the visibility at Valley had been reduced to 1800 yards with a ceiling of from 4-6/10 cloud coverage at 500 feet and an overcast of 1500 feet.

At 1718 hours local time "Marker Jig" called Valley Tower on 6440 KC's and reported that he was "On top at 4000 feet and had two and one half hours fuel aboard", he was then asked if he could work a procedure let down on the Valley range to which he replied that he had no information on the range and that his "G Box" had become inoperative at Atcham. He was told to stand by on top of the overcast as there were other aircraft letting down on the range at that time. At 1732 hours local time the Valley tower was notified by another aircraft in the flight that "Marker Jig" had lost an engine. Two minutes later "Marker Jig" called and said that #2 and #4 engines were "out". Control Tower at Valley asked "Marker Jig" at what altitude he was flying; to which pilot answered that bail out order had been given. Attempts were made to make further contact with "Marker Jig" but no contact could be made with the aircraft. At approximately 1745 hours local time, the Coast Guard reported having seen the aircraft crash into the water off the edge of Holyhead Mountain. By 1915 hours local time two members of the crew had been found; the Co-Pilot near Trearddur Bay, Anglesey and the Pilot near Holyhead, Anglesey. After questioning the two crew members it appeared quite probable that the eight remaining crew members had parachuted over the Irish Sea without flotation equipment.

It is the opinion of the Aircraft Investigating Committee that the responsibility for this accident lies in the following three places; First: Flying Control, the flight should have been diverted to Valley immediately after it had become evident that they could not land at Cheddington. Much valuable time had been lost by sending the flight to Atcham, whose weather at the time was uncertain. Second: The pilot should have kept a more accurate check on his fuel supply. At the time the engines were failing the pilot did not realize that he was getting short of fuel, however during the investigation he readily conceded that this was the only plausible reason for the engine failures. Third: The crew had not been properly briefed on terrain and airport facilities in the area. The Pilot had no knowledge whatsoever of the radio range at Valley nor did he know the position of the mountains in relation to the airdrome. At the time the pilot gave the order to bail out he did not know that the airport was situated on an island and the probability of his fellow crew members landing in the sea. They were depending entirely on "G" Box for Navigation, and when this went out they had no means of making an exact check on their position.



Signature

QUENTUS (NMI) [Signature] Capt. AC.
JAMES D. ROCKETT [Signature] Capt. AC.

WILLIAM T. KEEMAN, Capt. AC, Member

Date

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ARMY AIR FORCES
ARMY AIRWAYS COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM
DETACHMENT, 1319th ARMY AIRWAYS COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM SQUADRON
APO 64, U. S. ARMY

22nd December 1944

ACCIDENT REPORT

The tower's first contact (1717) was with "Marker Item", who reported 10 miles east of the field at 4,000 feet and asked if he could be let down through the overcast as he was above the clouds. I asked him if he was working the Henpeck Range, and he said he was not. He was told to stand by, and remain at same altitude until further advised.

"Marker Jig" reported in at (1718), stating he was behind "Marker Item" and would follow him in. "Marker Jig" was told to stand by. "Marker Fox" reported in shortly after and stated he was at 6,000 feet with about two hours gas supply. "Item" reported he had about two to three hours fuel as did "Jig".

The tower asked "Marker Item" if it was possible for him to make a standard Instrument Approach on the east leg of Henpeck Range. He replied he had no knowledge of the range frequency or its letdown procedure. The F.C.O (British) informed me he had three aircraft making letdowns on the range at the time.

At 1722 a British Wellington (Handful Fox) called me for landing instructions. He was contact, in sight and cleared to land No. 1 on runway 32. He landed at 1727. At 1725, a B-17, (Lawyer Baker), reported contact, requesting permission to land. Landing instructions were given and he landed at

After "Lawyer Baker" landed, he reported a hole in the clouds 5 miles out on the southwest leg of the Henpeck Range. Information was passed to the British F.C.O.

Shortly after 1730 "Marker Item" called the tower, stating that "Jig" was calling me to the effect that "Jig" had lost No. 4 engine. Information was passed immediately to the British F.C.O. and the American Operations. A few minutes later (approximately 1736) I established contact with "Jig" and he said that No. 2 motor was also out. I tried to get an altitude and position report from him, which he could not ascertain. At 1739 he said he was bailing out and I was instructed by the British F.C.O to tell him to put on I.F.F. broad in No. 3 position. I received no "Roger" on this, so I repeated this message several times.

At 1743 I asked "Item" if he could estimate the position of "Jig". He said he could not.

/s/ James Majeur,
/t/ JAMES MAJEUR, 36199057
T/Sgt., Air Forces

CERTIFIED A TRUE COPY:

[Signature]
WINTON (NMI) FILLARD,

Capt, AG,

Sr. Flt. Ops O.

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SECRET

FLYING CONTROL SECTION - VALLEY.

Extract from the report for 24 hours ending 0600 hrs 23rd Dec. 1944.

Seven B24's from Cheddington were unable to land at base, and at 1345 hrs Cheddington made arrangements with us to divert the aircraft to Valley if necessary.

At 1600 hours we were informed by the F.C.L.O North West Filter Room, that 5 of Cheddington's B24's were over Atchan, and would probably be coming to Valley. He was warned that our weather would probably clamp down after dark.

At 1655 hrs we were informed by Atchan that 3 of Cheddington's aircraft had been diverted to us E.T.A. 1730 hrs.

At 1730 hrs the F.C.L.O. passed plots on 2 of the B24's (over Menai Straits) and stated that they had 10 minutes endurance. At 1725 hrs the two aircraft were over the airfield, one at 4,000', the other at 6,000', and both reported 2 1/2 hours endurance.

At 1738, the first of these aircraft reported that one engine had cut and at 1740 reported that he was then flying on two engines. At 1741 he said he was losing height and that they were bailing out.

At 1745, the Coastguard at South Stack reported having seen an aircraft crash into the sea off South Stack.

Air/Sea Rescue action was taken immediately.

By 1915 hrs two of the crew had been found, the Co-Pilot near Troerddur Bay and the Pilot near Holyhead.

Search Parties from the 5th Cheshire Regt; 130 Coastal Battery, 307 Holding Battalion, Ty-Croes Practice Camp, Mona, Llandwrog and Rhoirgan assisted R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F. volunteers from this station, and the Police Force.

Boats, under the control of H.M.S. Bee, carried out an intensive search also.

By 2330 hours, information received from the pilot, made it appear probable that the other members of the crew (8) had bailed out over the sea. Search Parties were recalled "the search abandoned until daylight."

CERTIFIED A TRUE COPY

Quintus Feland
QUINTUS (MR) FELAND,
Captain, AG,
Sr. Flt. Opns. O.

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1717 Marker Item ----- 10 Miles East of field at 4000 feet. Give landing instructions.
Tower ----- Are you contact, Are you working high frequency range?
Marker Item ----- Roger.
Tower ----- Hold position remain above all clouds for further information.

1718 Marker Jig. ----- We are being Marker Item, we will follow him in.
Tower ----- How is your gas supply?
Marker Jig ----- Between two and three hours.
Tower ----- Roger. stand by.
Marker Fox ----- I have two hours gas supply.
Tower ----- Marker Fox. what is your altitude?
Marker Fox ----- 6000 feet, on top.
Tower ----- Remain there.

1722 Tower ----- Marker Jig, give me a call/
Handful Fox ----- Can I land?
Tower ----- Can you see the ground?
Handful Fox ----- Yes.
Tower ----- You are #1 and clear to land on runway 32.
Handful Fox ----- Roger.
Tower ----- Marker Jig, can you make an effective letdown how Radio Range?
Marker Jig ----- You want ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ us to let down.
Tower ----- Stand by.

1725 Lawyer Baker ----- I am circling the field.
Tower ----- Are you contact?
Lawyer Baker ----- Yes.
Tower ----- Roger, Runway 32 #2 to land.
Lawyer Baker ----- Roger.
Tower ----- Marker Jig, hold your position. Will instruct you when to come in.
Lawyer Baker ----- Are your lights on on the field?
Tower ----- Lights are on the field. you are clear to land.
Lawyer Baker ----- Roger.
Tower ----- Handful Fox, next left, follow the van.
Handful Fox ----- Wilco.

1729 Tower ----- Lawyer Baker, you are #1 to land on runway 32. Goto end of runway and turn left.
Lawyer Baker ----- Roger, Will you tell control that there is a hole in the clouds. it is good 5 miles north os SW leg.

1732 Tower ----- Roger, Will inform control.
Marker Item ----- Tower, Marker Jig would like to make an immediate let down.
Tower ----- Negative.
Marker Item ----- Can you tell how many ships are down there?
Marker Jig ----- Have no information about your range or anything, give info again will you?
Tower ----- (Gave Jig a long call)
Tower ----- Marker Item, give message about Marker Jig.
Marker Item ----- Marker Jig has lost an engine.
Tower ----- Roger, Will try to get him down as soon as possible.

1735 Lawyer Baker ----- Send Transportation.
Tower ----- Will do.
Tower ----- Marker Jig, stand by, will try to get you instructions immediately.
Tower ----- Marker Item: can you pass information to Marker Jig?
Marker Jig ----- #2 and #4 engines are Us.

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Tower ----- To all aircraft. Am using ~~the~~ frequency 174 Marker Jig.

1737 Marker Jig ----- #2 and #4 engines are US.

Tower ----- Roger, stand by.

Tower ----- Marker Jig; What is your altitude?

1739 Marker Jig ----- We are bailing out.

Tower ----- Turn on IFF #3 broad; Repeat Marker Jig; turn on Iff an ##3 broad.

Messhouse Z ----- Tower, Give me a call.

Tower ----- Stand by, stay off frequency.

1740 Tower ----- Marker Jig, turn on IFF #3 broad, if you read me turn on IFF #3 broad.

Messhouse Zebra ----- May I take down 2500 feet on 180 degrees.

Tower ----- Are you contact?

1743 Tower ----- Marker Item, can you estimate position where other aircraft bailed out?

Marker Item ----- I'm afraid I can't.

1745 Tower ----- Marker Item, what is your present altitude?

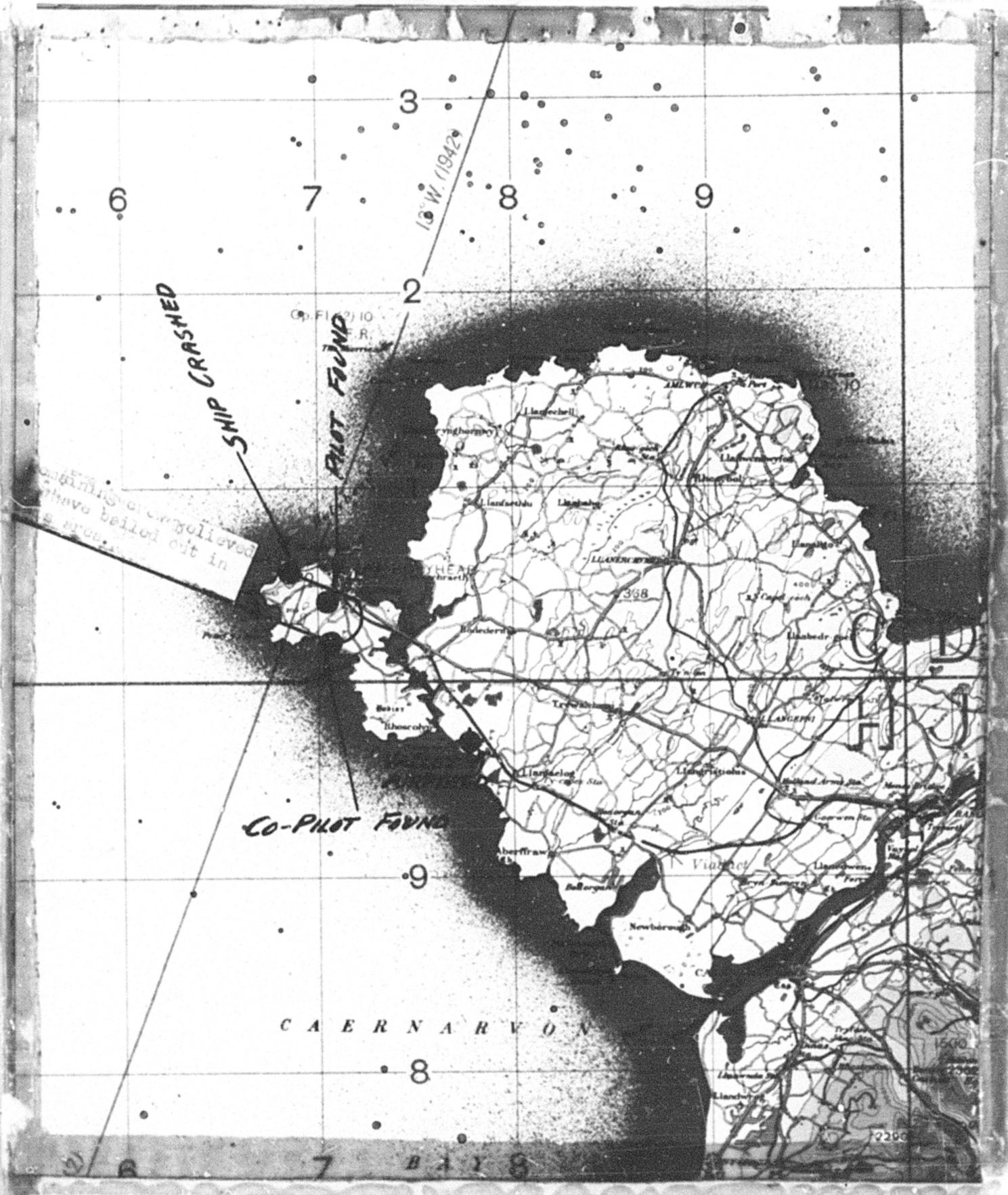
Marker item ----- May I land?

Tower ----- Negative, other aircraft over field.

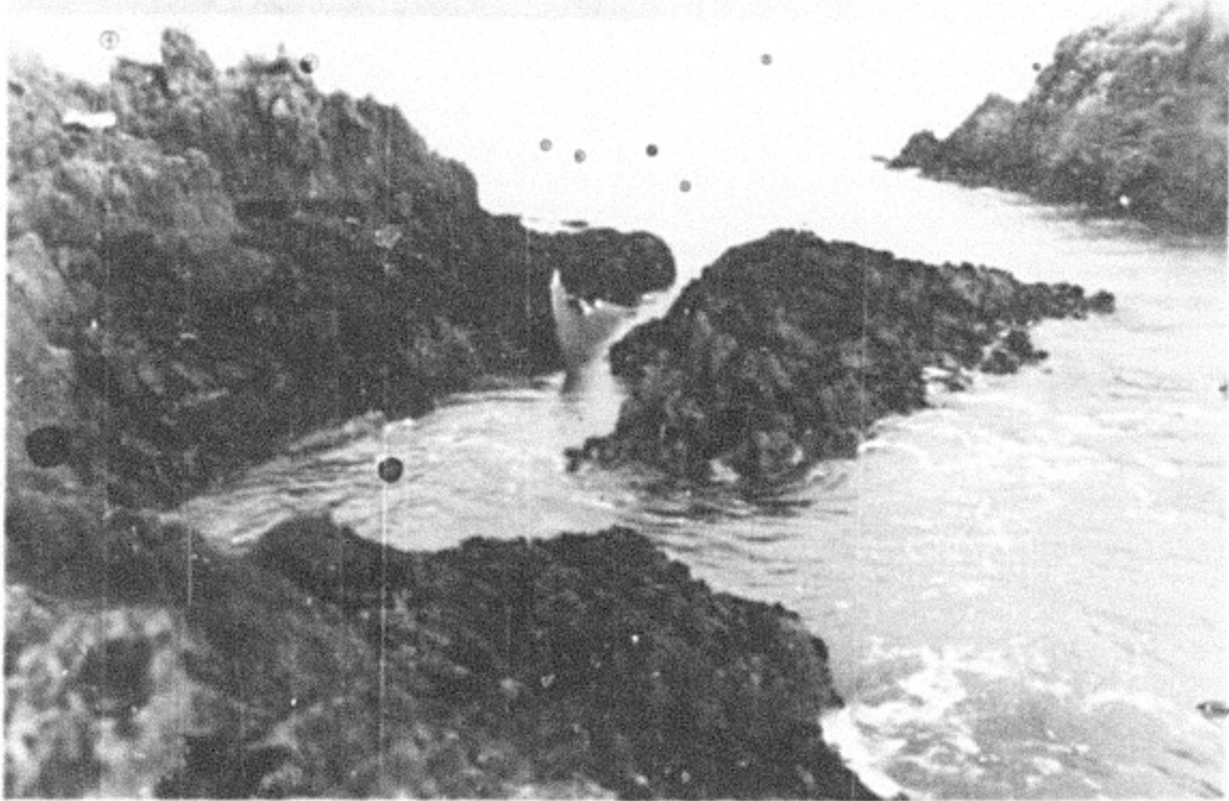
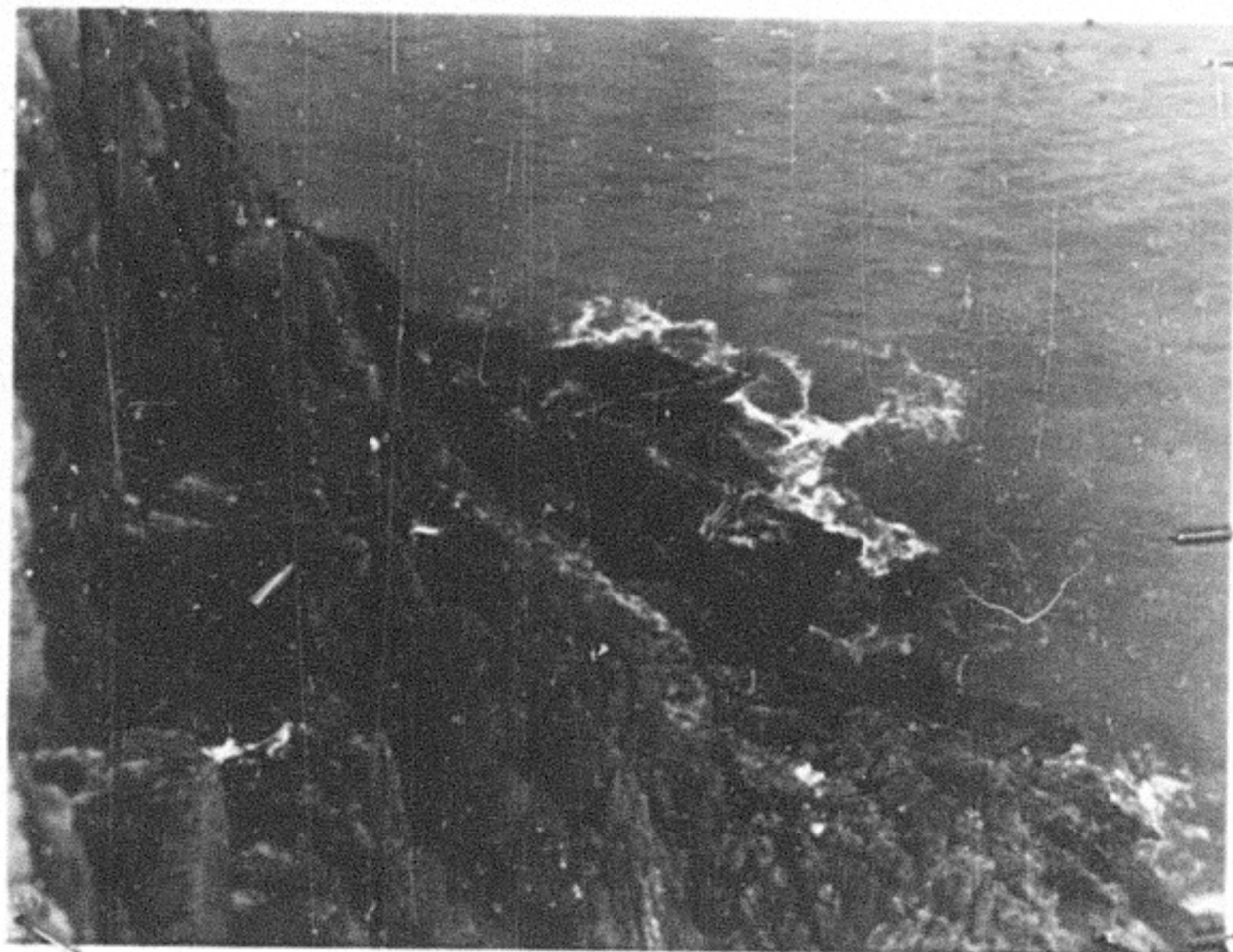
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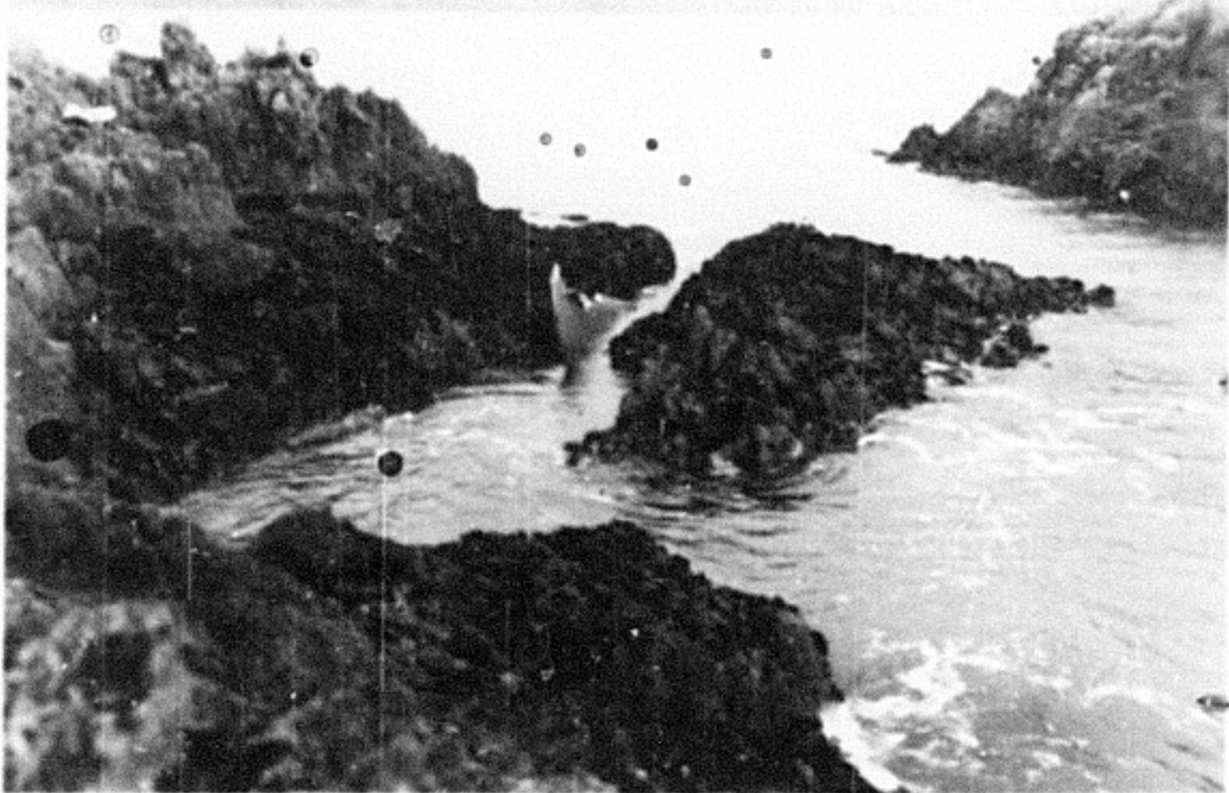
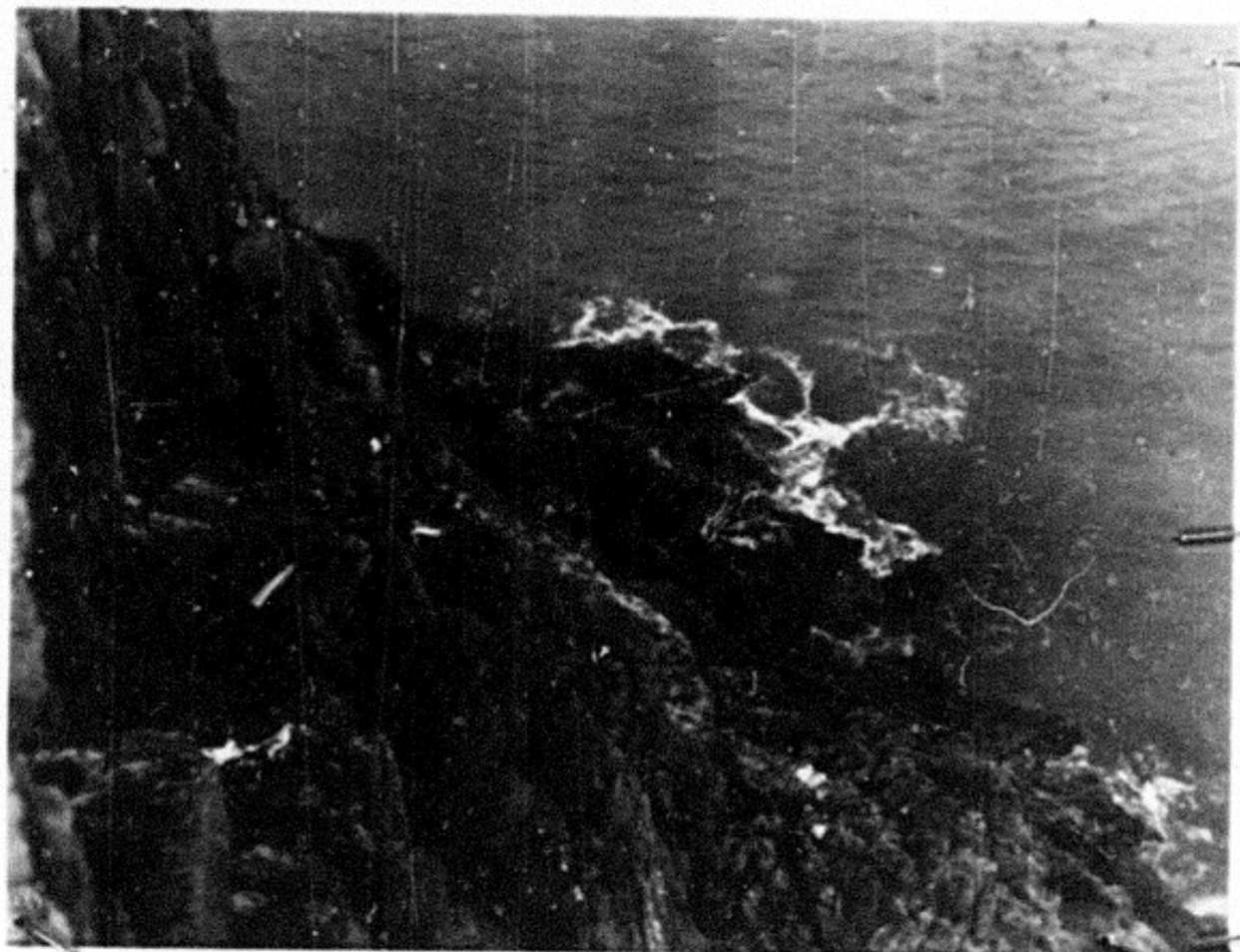
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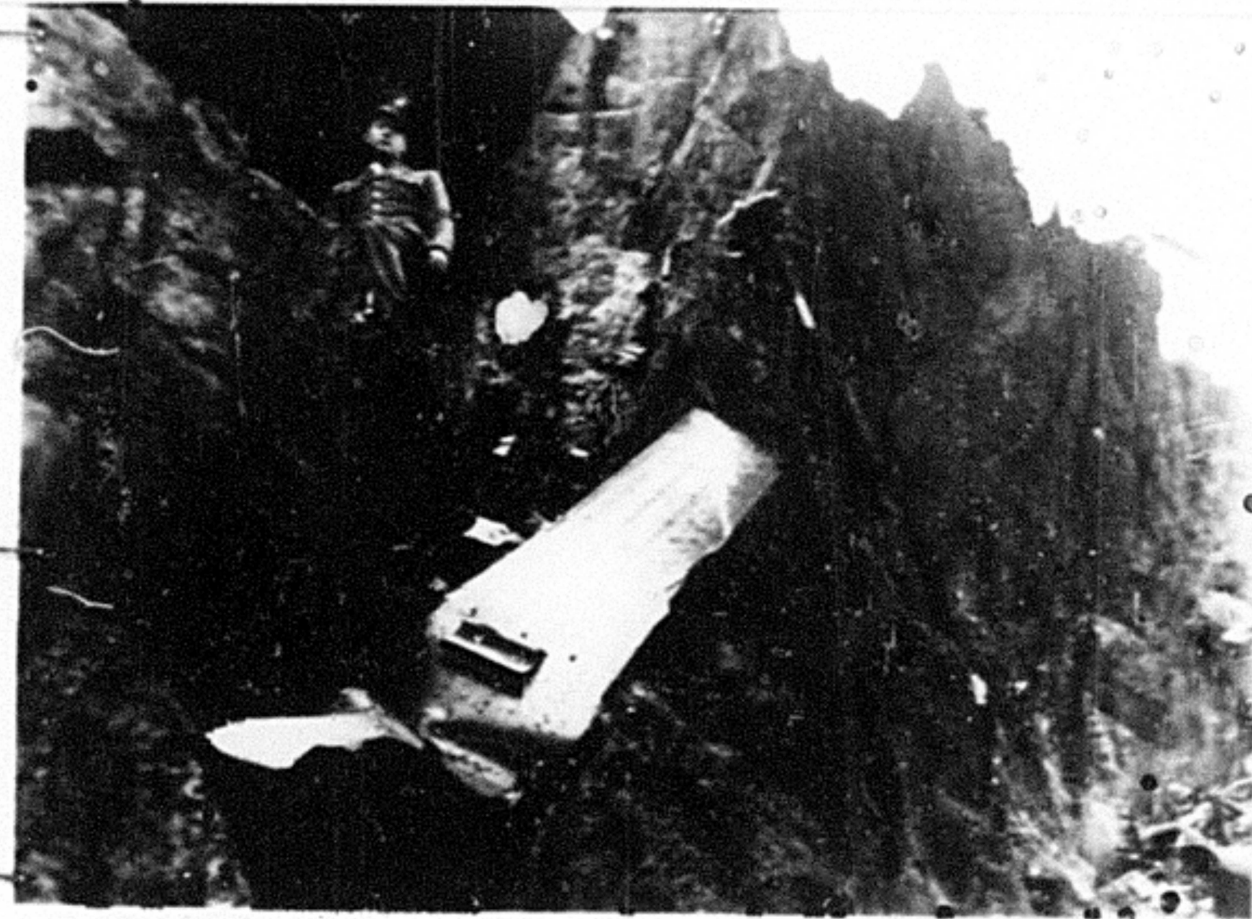
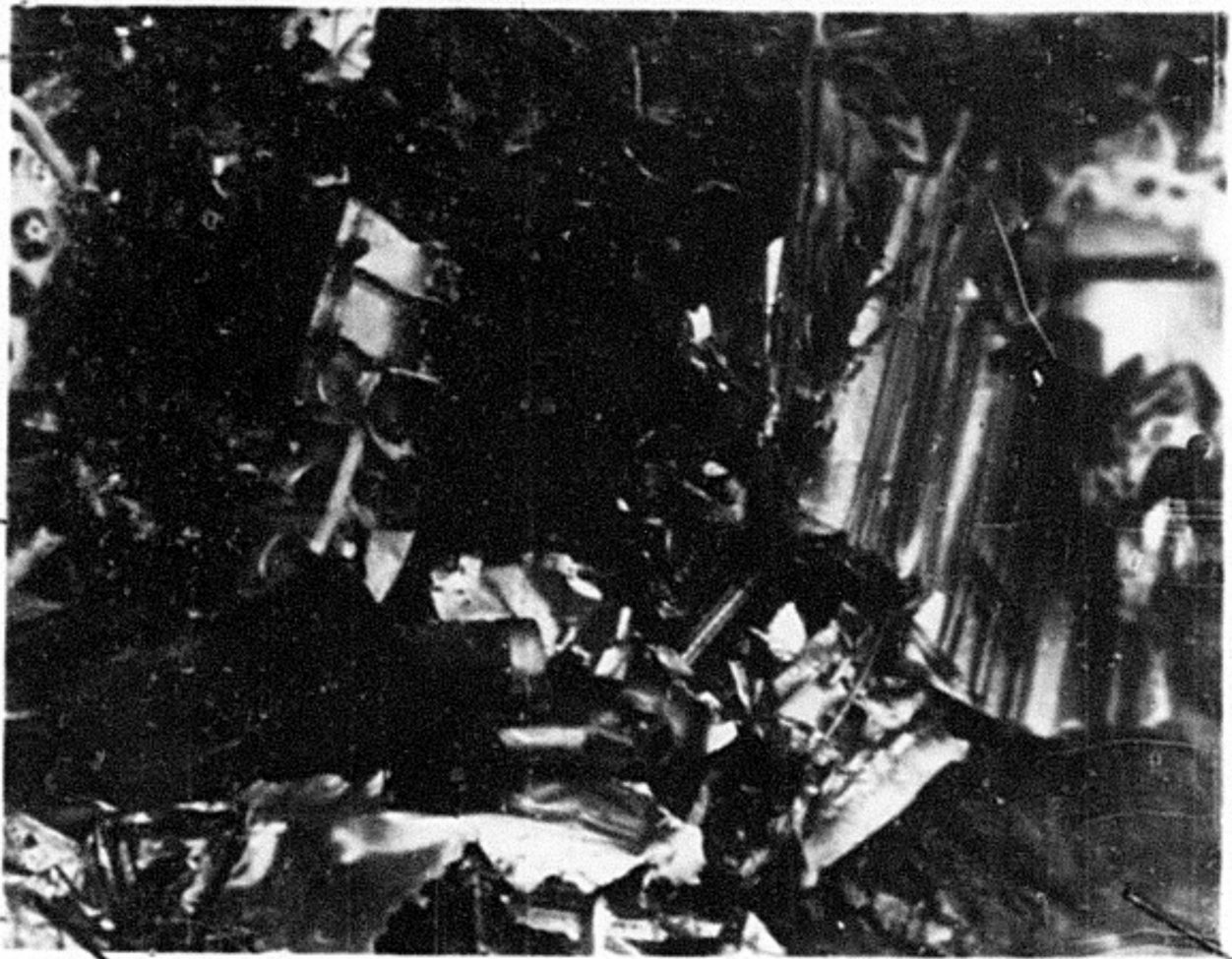


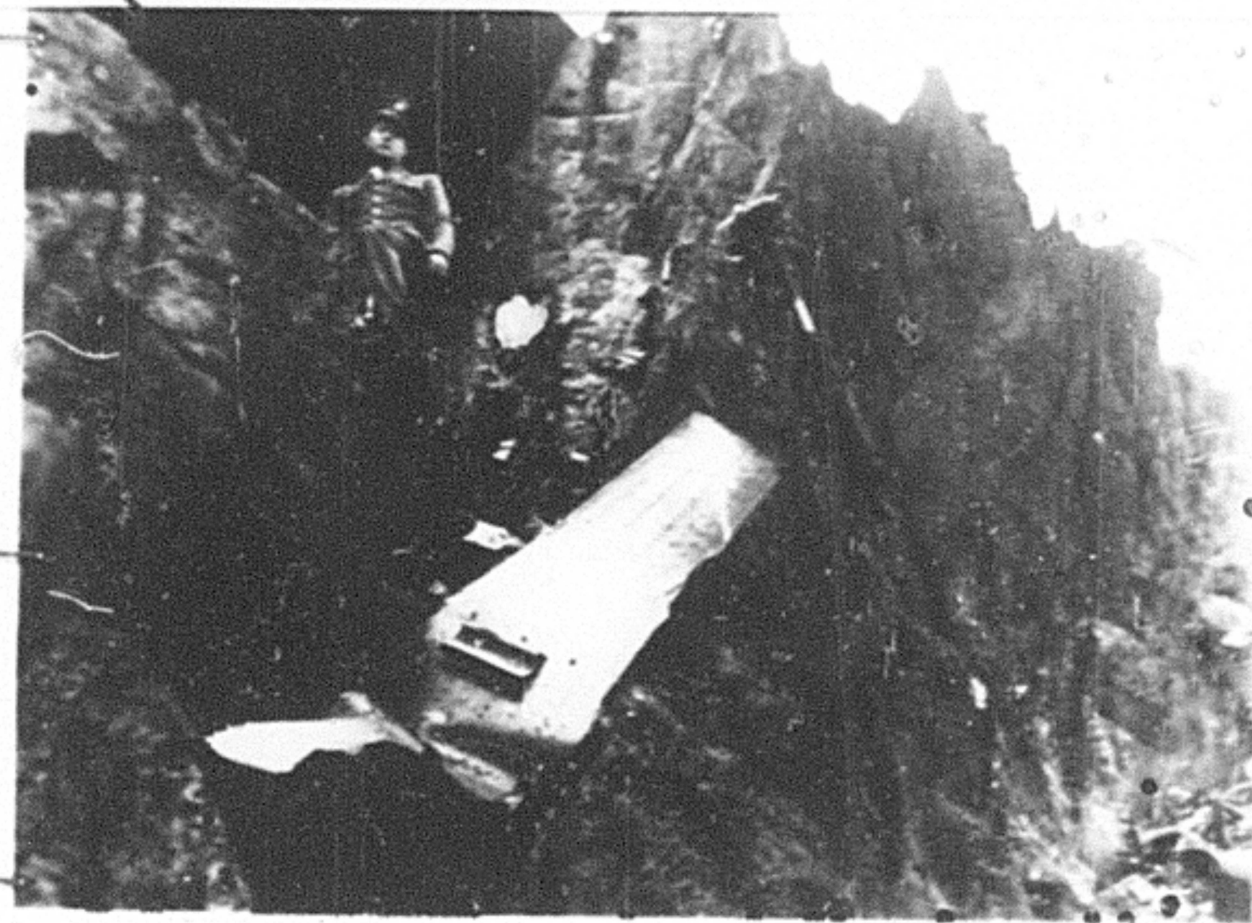
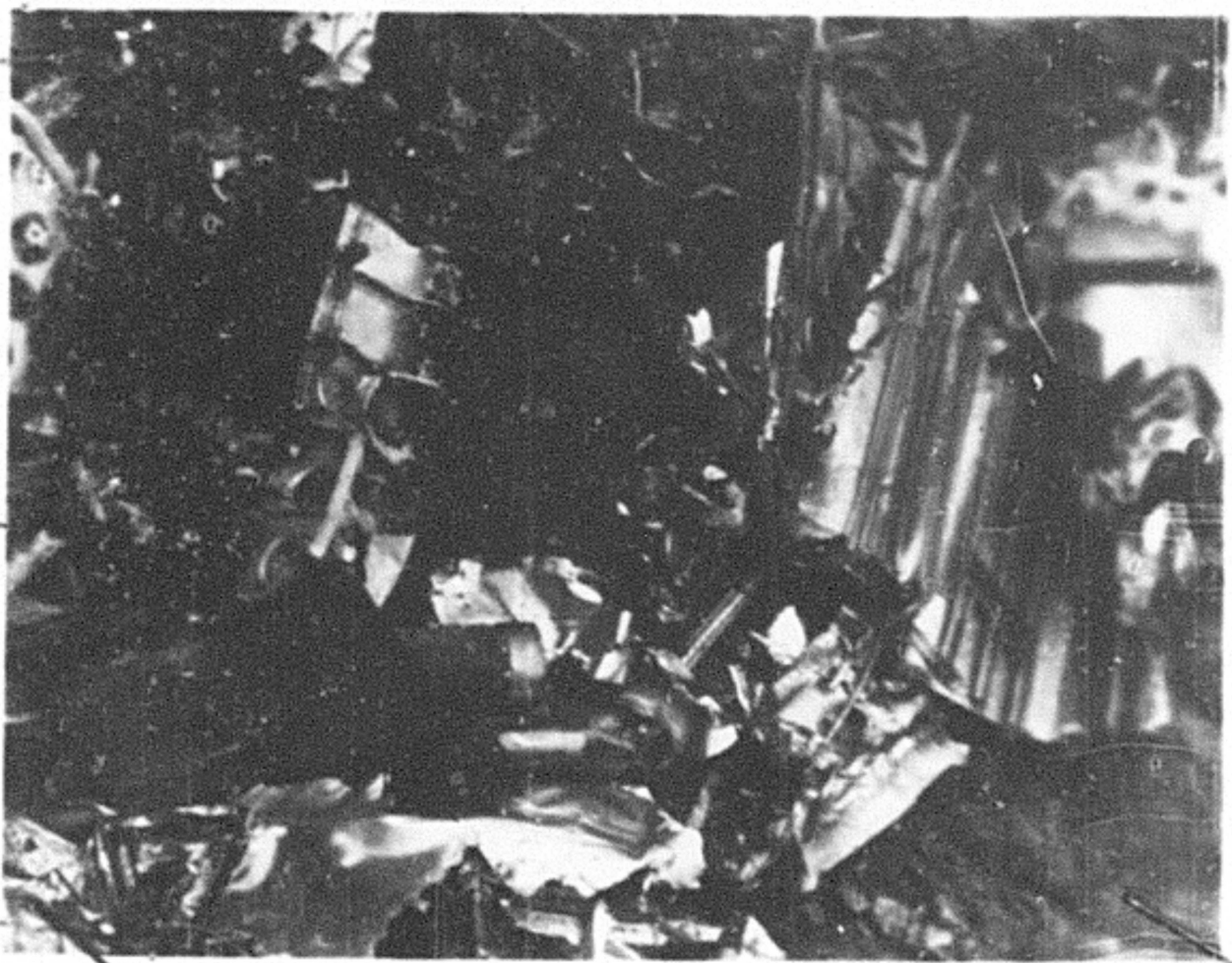
AS FAR AS CAN BE DETERMINED THIS IS THE FLIGHT PATH OF B-24J #51232 DURING THE EMERGENCY IN WHICH THE CREW BAILED OUT.

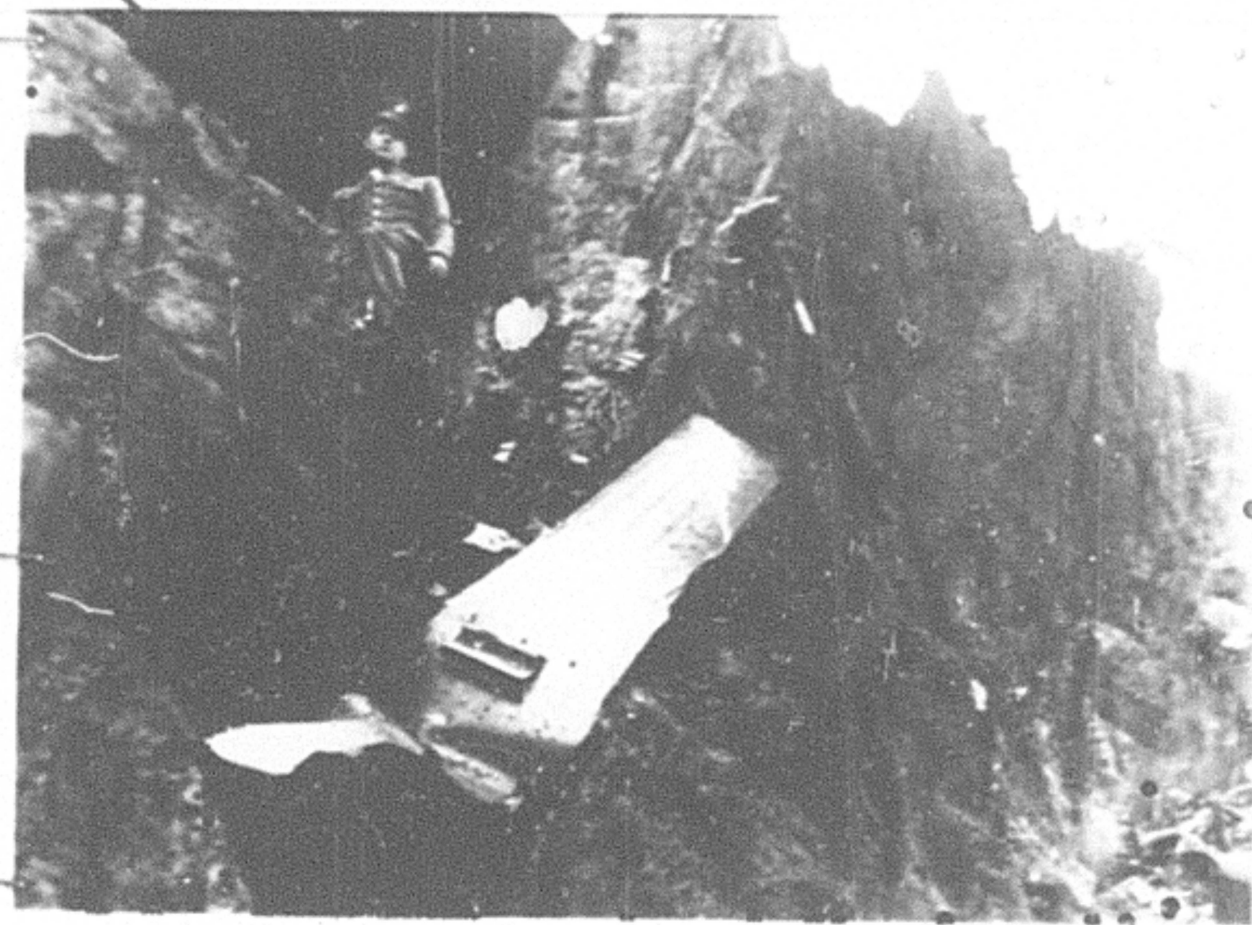
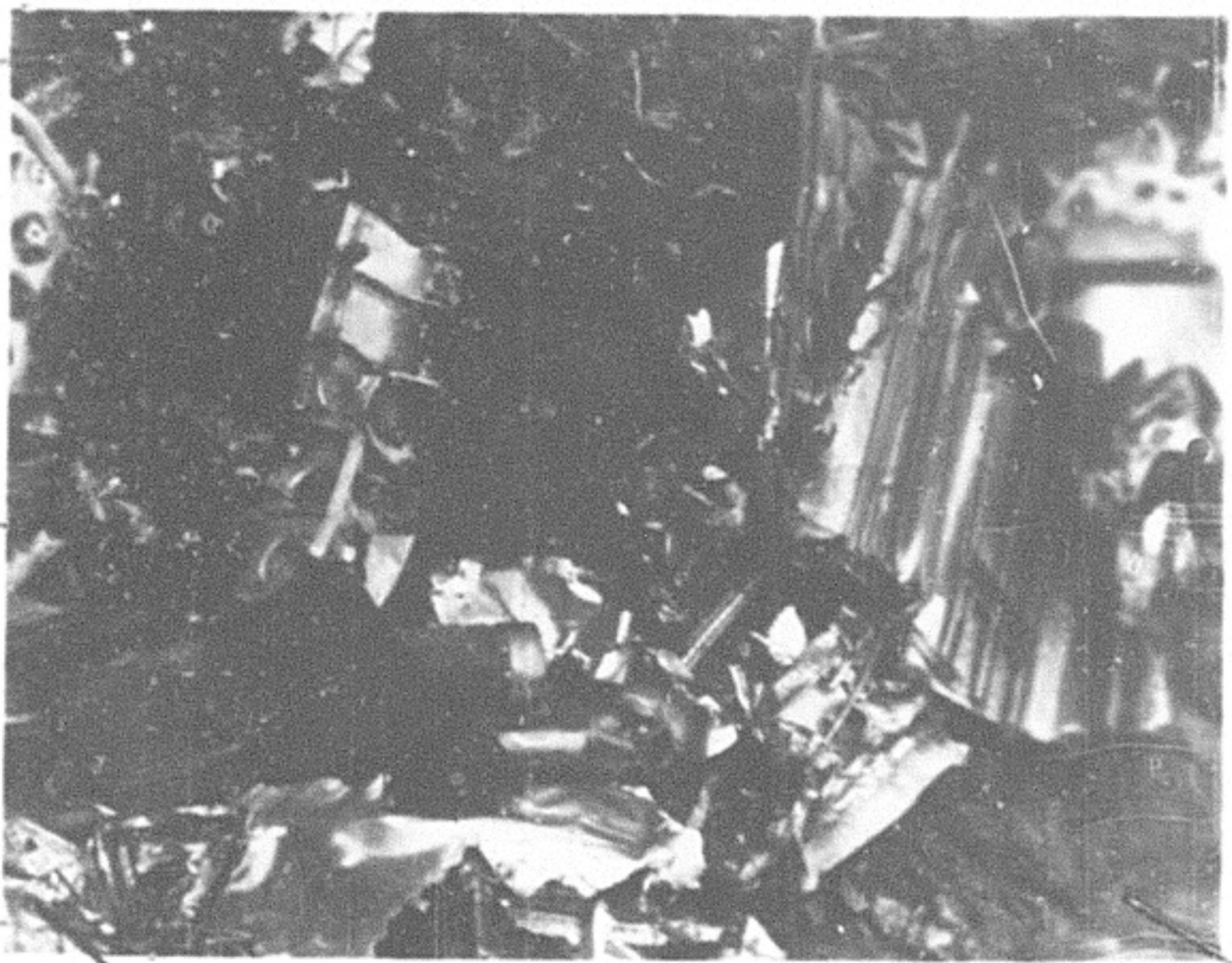












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HEADQUARTERS
1407TH AAF BASE UNIT
EUROPEAN DIVISION AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND
APO 741
U. S. ARMY

OPS/JDR/sds

6
A F S

360.33

4 January 1945

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

TO : Chief, Flying Safety, AAF, Winston-Salem 1, North Carolina.

1. Transmitted herewith Report of Aircraft Accident, AAF Form No. 14 for B-24-J, No. 42-51232.

1 Incl: AAF Forms No. 14
w/statement and photo

James Cochran
JAMES C. COCHRAN,
Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding.

DISTRIBUTION:

- Chief, Flying Safety, AAF, Winston-Salem 1, N.C.
- Commanding General, ATC, Washington, DC
- Commanding General, Hq, EURDATC
- Commanding General, Hq, 8th AF, AAF Sta. 101, APO 634
- Commanding Officer, Det A, 16th Mobile Reclamation & Repair Sqdn, APO 636
- Commanding Officer, AAF Sta. 113, APO 639.

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RM#1717

V5/55

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CORRECTION REQUEST

45-12-22-500

Accident No.	Batch No.	Type & Model	Air Force/Command	Safety Region
Card	Title of Items To Be Corrected			To
	injury of all personnel			
	<u>except</u> Bachm + Burch			missing fatal

From	To	UNSAFE ACTS			UNSAFE CONDITIONS		
		Pers.	Major	Specific	Viol.	Major	Specific
From							
To							
From							
To							
From							
To							

Person Submitting Correction _____

M.E.

(over)

7154-6-467SS

NAME OF PILOT

TYPE OF PLANE

ACCIDENT NUMBER

Boehm Harold T

B-24J

45-12-22-500

CHARGED TO:

OUT

IN

CHARGED TO:

OUT

IN

CHARGED. TO:

OUT

IN

Ruby Lewigaw

3-22

3/13

A. McDonald

10-3

14/10

Miss E. G. ...

9-22

9-26
47