

**CONFIDENTIAL** **RESTRICTED**

WAR DEPARTMENT  
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

**REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT**

4-14-50  
**THE BIRD**

5-12-45  
11120

(1) Place: AAF Station 123, APO 558 (2) Date: 14 April 1945 (3) Time: 0510  
 Aircraft: (4) Type and model: B-24 J-1 (5) A. F. No.: 42-100425V (6) Station: AAF 123  
 Organization: (7) 2AD VIII (8) 458th Bomb Gp (9) 752d Bombardment Squadron (H)  
 (Commanded and flown by) PERSONNEL BH Z180

Duty Position	NAME (Last name first)	Grade	Serial No. (10)	Last (11)	Previous Claim		Cause (13)	Air Force or Command (14)	Result to Personnel (15)	Use of Personnel (16)
					(12)	(13)				
P	GIBSON, REX L.	P.	0-2061679	2d Lt	18	AC	VIII	Killed	No.	
CP	MC SWAIN, RUFUS G.	P.	0-836898	2d Lt	18	"	"	"	No.	
N	ANTUNE, ROBERT F.	N.	T-137262	F/D	17	"	"	"	No.	
EW	Carriero, Leonard J.	E.	32410749	Sgt.	38	AAF	"	"	No.	
RO	Reckelman, Edward H.	RO	36656627	Sgt.	38	"	"	"	No.	
EW	Warr, Westford E.	G.	11042316	Sgt.	38	"	"	"	No.	
WT	Wilks, Willie R.	G.	14163580	Sgt.	38	"	"	Injured	No.	

**Abilty/Availability/Status**

(10) GIBSON, REX L. (11) 0-2061679 (12) 2d Lt (13) 18 (14) VIII (15) Killed  
 Assigned (16) 2AD VIII (17) 458th Bomb Gp (18) 752d Bomb Sq (H) (19) AAF 123  
 Attached for flying (20) 2AD VIII (21) 458th Bomb Gp (22) 752d Bomb Sq (H) (23) AAF 123  
 Original rating (24) Pilot (25) 27 May 44 Present rating (26) Pilot (27) 27 Nov 44 Instrument rating (28) 4 January 1945

**Former Flight Records:**  
 (at the time of this accident)  
 (29) This type: 119,000 (30) Instrument time last 6 months: 17,110  
 (31) This model: 324,150 (32) Instrument time last 30 days: 100  
 (33) Last 90 days: 138,140 (34) Night time last 6 months: 52,335  
 (35) Total: 545,000 (36) Night time last 30 days: 4,800

**AIRCRAFT DAMAGE**

DAMAGE	NO. LEFT OF DAMAGED PARTS
(37) Aircraft: <u>4</u>	Airplane completely destroyed.
(38) Engine(s): <u>4</u>	
(39) Propeller(s): <u>4</u>	

(40) Weather at the time of accident: Wind TE 3 kts. Visibility was somewhere between 1500 and 300 yards. Fog was increasing. Accident occurred at 0512. Visibility at 0500 was 300 yards.

(41) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident: Yes  
 (42) Cleared from: AAF 123 (43) To: AAF 123 (44) Kind of clearance: Instrument

(45) Pilot's mission: Combat

(46) Nature of accident: Plane crashed a few seconds after take-off.

(47) Cause of accident: Unknown but reduced visibility believed to be a factor. Pilot's position or clearance.

(48) Has Form 24 been submitted: No

**RESTRICTED**  
 BY AUTHORITY OF CE, AAF  
**RESTRICTED**  
 CONT ID

**DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT**

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

The plane was taking off on a combat mission at night and under reduced visibility caused by fog conditions. Actual visibility at take-off time was unknown. As the accident occurred between 0500 and 0600 the times of weather observations. The plane crashed soon after take-off the right wing hitting a tree and the left wing hitting a telephone pole before the plane hit the ground. The aircraft was completely destroyed.

Immediate Cause: Right wing hitting a tree under poor visibility conditions.

Underlying Cause: Plane apparently did not gain sufficient altitude after take-off. Pilot was on instructions and may have thought he was climbing when he saw not.

Responsibility: 100% Unknown.

Recommendations: None.

*James A. Hill*  
 James A. Hill, O-307596  
 Lt Col, Air Corps,  
 President.

*Walter H. Williams*  
 Walter H. Williams, O-307596  
 Lt Col, Air Corps,  
 Pilot



*Walter H. Hill*  
 Walter H. Hill, O-23032  
 Major, Air Corps,  
 Pilot

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

# CONFIDENTIAL

STATION WEATHER OFFICE  
AAF STATION 123  
APO 558

26 APRIL 1945

STATEMENT OF WEATHER FOR 0500-0600 HRS, 14 APRIL 1945.

1. THE FOLLOWING IS A STATEMENT OF THE WEATHER EXISTING AT AAF STATION 123 FOR 0500-0600 HOURS, 14 APRIL 1945, SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH 2 AD INSTRUCTIONS 55-9A, DATED 16 JANUARY 1945.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>CEILING</u>	<u>SKY COVERAGE</u>	<u>WEATHER</u>	<u>VISIBILITY</u>	<u>TEMP-D.P.</u>	<u>WIND</u>
0500	UNLIMITED	0/10	MIST	1800 YD	45	43 SE-3MPH
0600	UNLIMITED	0/10	FOG	300 YD	43	42 SSE-4MPH

2. THE VISIBILITY DETERIORATED RAPIDLY FROM 0500-0600 HOURS AT THIS STATION. AT AAF STATION 145, THE VISIBILITY DECREASED FROM 600 YARDS TO 300 YARDS, DURING THE SAME TIME. THIS WAS A LOCAL FOG *LOCAL* CONDITION AT THESE TWO BASES. NO OTHER STATION IN THIS DIVISION REPORTED LESS THAN 1800 YARDS, DURING THE PERIOD OF THE ACCIDENT.

3. AAF STATION 145 LIES APPROXIMATELY 6 MILES ENE OF AAF STATION 123. SINCE THE WIND WAS SE-SSE AT 3-4 MPH, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE LOCAL FOG MAY HAVE MOVED FROM THAT DIRECTION TO OBSCURE THE FAR END OF THE TAKE OFF RUNWAY, AT THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT. THE TAKE OFF WAS ON RUNWAY 05.

*George J. Hebel*  
GEORGE J. HEBEL,  
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS,  
STATION WEATHER OFFICER.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

360.33

1st 4/Ind.

B-UU-1

HEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE, APO 634

To: Chief, Flying Safety, AAF, Winston-Salem 1, N.C. MAY 3 1945

1. Transmitted herewith WD AAF Form No. 14 and allied papers on the following aircraft accidents:

- a. 2nd Lt. David R. Totten, B-24M number 42-92180
- b. 2nd Lt. Joseph J. Devlin, B-24M number 41-29593
- c. 2nd Lt. Rex M. Gibson, B-24J number 42-100423
- d. 1st Lt. Myron A. Wilson, B-24M number 44-43315
- e. 2nd Lt. Merle W. Amersbaugh, P-51D-10 number 42-103793
- f. 1st Lt. Joe D. Nelson, P-51D number 44-72325
- g. 2nd Lt. William C. Fitch, P-51D-20 number 44-63197

2. Encour.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

RECEIVED

11

7 Incls:

As above.

# CONFIDENTIAL

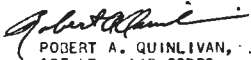
FLYING CONTROL  
AAF 123 APO 558

14 APRIL 1945

## ACCIDENT STATEMENT

AT 0915 HOURS THIS DATE THE GUARD HOUSE CALLED THE TOWER TO REPORT THE DISCOVERY OF ANOTHER AIRCRAFT THAT HAD CRASHED. CRASH ACTION FOUND IT TO BE B-24 AIRCRAFT 425 "O", PILOTED BY LT. GIBSON OF THE 752ND SQUADRON. THIS AIRCRAFT HAD APPARENTLY CRASHED AT TAKE OFF TIME, BUT DUE TO THE FOG CONDITIONS WAS NOT OBSERVED. ONE CREW MEMBER OUT OF SEVEN SURVIVED.

WEATHER: SE AT 3 M.P.H. - VIZ. 1800 YARDS.

  
ROBERT A. QUINLIVAN,  
1ST LT., AIR CORPS,  
FLYING CONTROL OFFICER.

OPY:  
FORM 14 (GROUP OPERATIONS)

FILE

CONFIDENTIAL