

IX55295 Pte Ellis Frederick Charles 2/33 Aust Inf Bn being duly sworn gives the following evidence :-

On morning of 7 Sep 43 I was in truck serial No. M 149. I heard the noise of a plane approaching and saw a plane come over a rise. I said " Gee, it's low". A few seconds later I saw it hit a tree. It appeared to me as if the port wing snapped off and the rest of the plane crashed into the side of the hill near the truck. There were two explosions and I was blown out of the truck. I picked myself up and moved awat from the trucks. There was fire everywhere. I don't recollect what happened after that. Ambulances turned up very shortly afterwards.

F. C. Ellis.....

His evidence is read over to the witness.

TX6031 Lieut Clive Albert Sinclair Hart 2/12 Aust Inf Bn attached to
Aust Div Marshalling Area being duly sworn gives the following evidence :-

On the morning of 7 Sep 1943 at approx 0350 hrs a convoy of 18 vehicles arrived at the marshalling area with personnel of 2/33 Aust Inf Bn on board. These personnel were to be marshalled prior to movement to Durand's Drome for emplaning.

The vehicles were duly marshalled in numerical order. The serial Nos. of the vehicles were M 132 to M 149. The vehicles were ready to move at approx 0430 hrs. When the marshalling had been completed I moved towards the cookhouse to arrange for tea to be made. As I approached the cookhouse I heard explosions which sounded to me like a bombing raid. The explosions came from the direction of the area in which the vehicles were marshalled. I looked around and noticed that fires had broken out. I immediately moved towards the vehicles and issued instructions for the vehicles to be moved. It was very foggy and smoky and I could not see all the vehicles. The vehicles were moved out of the area and on making a check I found that vehicles serial Nos. M 145, M146, M 147, M 148 and 149 could not be moved as they were in the area where the fires were burning. I called the roll from the emplaning tables to see who was missing. I marked the rolls in respect of those who did not answer in accordance with information given to me by personnel who were present. The markings I made were "M" and "W". "M" meaning missing and "W" meaning wounded. I understand that further markings were made on the rolls at a later period. I have since looked at the rolls and note that the letter "H" had been placed opposite certain names. I understand that the letter "H" means hospital. The calling of the rolls was not accurate as owing to the confusion certain men were still wandering around and others were helping to evacuate the wounded. I produce to the Court copies of the emplaning tables covering vehicles Serial Nos. M 132 to M 149. I understand that one of the vehicles left in the area was later moved out, I am not certain of the number of this vehicle.

Clive A. Hart Lieut.
.....TX6031.....

His evidence is read over to the witness

. Col. Harry J. Hawthorne being duly sworn gives the following evidence:-

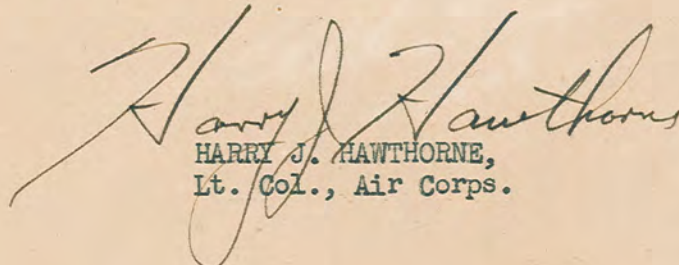
I am C.O. of the 43rd Bombardment Group (H), U.S. Army Air Force. A Liberator Bomber under my command piloted by Flight Officer Wood took off at 0420 hours on 7 September, 1943. The aircraft was loaded with four 500 lb. bombs and there were no bomb bay tanks. There were eleven men in all in the plane including the pilot. They were all under my command. The full load of the aircraft is twelve 500 lb. bombs when there are no bomb bay tanks. At Jackson's Airfield from which the above aircraft took off there is traffic control at the end of the runway. It was reported to me that a crash had occurred and I caused inquiries to be made as to likely causes of the crash but have been unable to determine what the causes were. Under ordinary circumstances an aircraft should have no difficulty in making the necessary height with the length of runway available.

In my opinion it would not be possible for flames to have come from the front of an engine cowling. It is quite possible however that flames might be seen coming from one of the engines and frequently flames do emerge from the supercharger. I am satisfied that there was no engine failure. Normal inspection of the aircraft had taken place prior to the aircraft taking off. The aircraft was loaded with 2800 gallons of petrol which is a normal load.

The pilot was experienced. His total flying time was 628 hours and he had had 420 hours in a B-24 type aircraft. He had flown 97 hours in the last three months.

From inquiries made by me I have ascertained that the bombs were fused and on safety. I called for a report on the explosions and I now produce copy of report by an ordnance officer, dated 10 September, 1943.

(Copy of report produced marked M and annexed to the proceedings) None of the aircraft crew survived. Ten of the bodies were definitely identified. The eleventh was not positively identified, but an eleventh body was recovered and I am satisfied from inquiries that it was the body of the eleventh member of the crew.


HARRY J. HAWTHORNE,
Lt. Col., Air Corps.

His evidence is read over to the witness

WITNESS.

NX 70824 Major Kenneth Fryer CROZIER, Officer Commanding 7 AUST. DIV. TPT. POOL. being duly sworn gives the following evidence:-

At approx 0400 hrs on the morning of 7 Sep. 43., 20x3 ton vehicles from the Pool, and 18x3 ton vehicles from "A" Pl. 158/^{Aust}Gen Tpt Coy attached to the Pool were on authorised duty, assembled at the 7 Div. Marshalling Park loaded with personnel and stores of the 2/33 Aust Inf. Bn., shortly after 0400 hrs, and whilst awaiting instructions to move to Jacksons Drome, a plane crashed in close proximity to the rear of the convoy, the resultant explosion and fire destroyed a number of vehicles, one of the drivers being killed and four injured, particulars of the damage to vehicles and injuries to personnel are as under:-

VEHICLES on the strength of 158 Aust Gen Tpt Coy - W.D. No's 23632 - 23641 - 23714 - 23747 - 4 x 3 ton Chev. G.S. completely destroyed by explosion and fire, W.D. No. 23712 Chev. G.S. removed to unit lines, damaged by being struck by portion of the plane and subsequently inspected and written off by Lieut. Maxstead of S.&T. Services N.G.F.

I submit(A.A.F. G.4) (in trip) covering vehicles No's 23641 - 23714 - 23747 - 23712.- 23632., (documents sighted by Court admitted as evidence, and annexed to proceedings and marked exhibits.A..
to E inclusive

PERSONNEL, on the strength of 158 Aust Gen Tpt Coy - Killed - N256189 Dr. Taranto J.V.

Injured N199319 Dr. Kearines V.W.- succumbed to injuries after admission to 2/5 A.G.H. - N256180 Dr. Silkman J.A. - NX150539 Dr. Donovan E.R.

on the strength of 2/33 Aust Gen Tpt Coy - NX19921 Dr. Fernley H.L.

At approx. 1000 hrs on the 7 Sep. 43 NX55916 Dr. Small S.J. who was on authorised duty driving Pool vehicle was injured at the Marshalling Area as the result of an explosion of ammunition which was loaded on one of the damaged vehicles referred to above, vehicle in question having caught fire at the time of the crash and was still burning.

The injured personnel are all patients at 2/5 A.G.H.

D.11's covering the injuries to all personnel have been completed. The original of those relating to Drs. Fernley and Small have been submitted to A.D.S.T. No. 2 sub-area. I submit to the Court certified copies (in trip).

I submit D.11's (in trip). relating to personnel of 158 Aust Gen Tpt Coy. namely:- Drs. Taranto, Kearines, Silkman, Donovan.

(Documents sighted by Court, admitted as evidence, and annexed to proceedings and marked exhibits *F.G.X inclusive*

NX19921, Dr. Fernley H.L. and NX55916 Dr. Small S.J. voluntarily enlisted, Dr. Fernley, May 1940, Dr. Small, July 1940 and have had continuous service in the Middle East. Australia and New Guinea.

NX150539 Dr. Donovan E.R. voluntarily enlisted on 16.12.42 and has had continuous service in Australia and New Guinea.

N199319 Dr. Kearines V.W., N256189 Dr. Taranto J.V., and N256180 Dr. Silkman J.A. were called up for Continuous Full Time Service.

Immediately after the accident, I visited the scene of the crash and found four vehicles on fire, one having been blown on its side by the force of the explosion, and, although the available fire fighting appliances from Jacksons Drome and 400 gallon water truck from the Pool were put into operation, they were ineffective, as it was impossible to approach the burning vehicles owing to explosion of ammunition loaded on them, eventually the fire fighting appliances had to be withdrawn and all personnel cleared from the vicinity of the vehicles owing to these explosions, this state of affairs continued until the vehicles burnt themselves out.

Vehicle 23712 was the leading vehicle of the five that were damaged and was immediately in front of vehicle 23747 which was blown on its side.

A check was made of all personnel attached to the Pool who were on duty at the scene of the accident and all were then accounted for with the exception of those already mentioned in this statement.

His evidence is read over to witness who signs and withdraws.

[Signature]
.....Major.

NX16949 WO 1 William Joseph PALMISANO being duly sworn gives the following evidence :-

I am R.S.M. of 2/5 A.G.H. On the morning of 7 Sep 43 16 dead bodies were delivered to the hospital. Eleven bodies arrived in the first vehicle. Only one of these bodies was identified. It had a tag on it on which appeared the name "Dvr. TARANTO". The bodies were badly smashed about and had to be pieced together. When pieced together the 16 bodies were complete with the exception of some limbs. Fifteen unidentified bodies were taken from the hospital for burial at Bomana Cemetery. The bodies of all persons who died at 2/5 A.G.H. are buried at Bomana Cemetery.

I submit to the Court list of admissions to 2/5 A.G.H which were a result of the plane smash at 7 Aust Div Marshalling Area on 7 Sep 43. This list sets out the names of (a) all personnel who have died in hospital (b) identified bodies which were delivered to hospital and (c) personnel at present in hospital or who have been since discharged. List produced marked exhibit "4".

W Palmisano WO1

His evidence is read over to the witness.

QX.17861 W.O.1 Leslie PICKERING being duly sworn states:-

I am R.S.M. of 2/9 Aust General Hospital. I produce list of personnel admitted to the said hospital suffering from injuries received in the accident which occurred on 7 Sep 43 as the result of an aeroplane crash. The list shows those who have died since admission.

(List produced to the Court and marked N)

*Leslie Pickering W.O.1
QX17861*

His evidence is read over to the witness

NX I2294 Capt Cyrus Norman Banner PEACH, O.C. 2/33 Aust Inf Bn LOB Group being duly sworn gives the following evidence :-

"I look at Exhibit **N** List of Admissions to 2/9 A.G.H. The names appearing thereon are all members of 2/33 Aust Inf Bn. The persons shown thereon as having died have been buried at Bomana Cemetery.

I look at Exhibit **L** List of Admissions to 2/5 A.G.H. The names appearing thereon shown as being members of 2/33 Aust Inf Bn, are members of 2/33 Aust Inf Bn. SX I7640 Pte MILLER, K.A.G. is not shown as an admission to 2/5 A.G.H. He was dead on arrival at Hospital and his body was subsequently identified. NX 5087 Cpl N.J. ROSE, QX 2525 Pte C.S. BATTIS and NX 54083 Sjt W.W. MACKAY were admitted to an American Hospital and were subsequently moved to 2/5 A.G.H. Exhibit **L** was prepared prior to movement of the personnel from the American Hospital to 2/5 A.G.H. NX 39846 Pte E.J. SMALLEY died in 2/5 A.G.H. His body was identified and tagged at the Hospital, but during removal to cemetery Tag must have been lost as he was buried as an unidentified body.

A nominal roll of all personnel present with the unit in the forward area was obtained by me; When this roll was asked for it was stressed that it was for the particular purpose of checking to ascertain missing personnel. I checked this roll with the Unit records, the List of admissions to all Hospitals and the Explaining Tables which were used on the move of the Bn. I ascertained that the following personnel of the Bn. are missing :-

VX II997	CAPT	FERGUSON	J.B.
WX I3761	PTE	WARD	C.L.
SX I7902	"	DONALD	R.
NX 95991	"	McDONALD	C.
SX 27897	"	REID	R.M.
NX 50797	"	SPEAR	J.S.
NX 2755	"	DARLING	A.W.
NX 97110	"	WHITTLE	I.E.
NX 88068	"	QUINN	J.D.
QX 3I24	"	SIMMONDS	G.C.
VX 87009	"	FIELDER	W.W.
NXI47063	"	WEBSTER	C.J.
NX 37382	"	SLADE	B.H.

The name of Pte SMALLEY is not shown above because although he was buried among the unidentified, his body was actually identified at the Hospital.

I am satisfied that all the above personnel shown as missing were in fact in the Marshalling Area at approx 0420 hrs on morning ~~XX~~ 7 Sep 43.

All personnel of 2/33 Aust Inf Bn involved in the accident were voluntarily enlisted for active service outside Australia.

His evidence is read over to Witness.

18 Sep 43

..... *Peach Capt*
Signature of Witness.

NX I2294 Capt Cyrus Norman Banner Peach recalled on former oath gives the following additional evidence :-

"In addition to the personnel mentioned on the above List the following personnel were injured and attended 2/5 Aust Fd Amb.

NX 45423	Pte	WENHAM	S G
NX 6251	"	POCOCK	A F

His evidence is read over to Witness.

..... *Peach Capt*
Signature of Witness.

OFFICE OF THE QUARTERMASTER
GRAVES REGISTRATION OFFICER
ADVANCE BASE "D"
A.P.O. 929

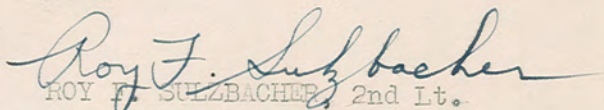
RFS/jwd

18 September, 1943

Lieut Roy Frederick SULZBACHER, Graves Registration Officer, Advance Base "D", U.S. Army, being duly sworn gives the following evidence:

On 7 September, 1943 my staff picked up the bodies of the crew of the American plane which was involved in the accident at the 7 Aust Div Marshalling Area. Originally ten bodies were recovered. All parts of the eleventh body were not recovered. Parts of the body were scattered over a wide area and were so mutilated and so small that they did not by any means make a complete body. I have been informed that fifteen bundles were buried as bodies in the Bomana War Cemetery and that names can only be found for fourteen missing Australian soldiers. It is very possible that the parts contained in one of these parcels buried as a body did belong to a member of the plane crew. Arrangements have been made to disinter one of the parcels from the Bomana War Cemetery and rebury the parts contained therein with the incomplete body already buried in the U.S.A.F. Cemetery, Port Moresby No. 1, New Guinea. It is very possible that the missing parts ^{OF THE ELEVENTH BODY} could have been picked up by the Australians and buried as a body as the parts were sufficient for them to be buried as such.

His evidence is read over to the witness:


ROY F. SULZBACHER, 2nd Lt.
Graves Registration Officer,
Advance Base "D".

Q267069 Cpl. VARNEY. Edward Earnest, 17 Aust Graves Reg & Eng Unit.

being duly sworn gives the following evidence:-

Of personnel killed in the Plane Crash on the 7 Sept, '43 41 (Forty-one) were buried with names. These names are as per list marked and attached to the proceedings. 15 (Fifteen) parcels were buried as being unidentified. Of these, one parcel weighed approximately 10-lbs and another approximately 20-lbs. None of the parcels were inspected by me or any other person in this Unit, and I am unable to say whether, in fact, there were 15 (Fifteen) different people buried in that batch.

His evidence is read over to the Witness.

E. E. Varney Cpl.
17 Aust Graves Reg & Eng Unit

SX693 Pte Harry Lewis Davies HQ 18 Aust Inf Bde being duly sworn gives the following evidence :-

I am batman to Capt Seddon. I was walking from the cookhouse to Capt Seddon's tent sometime before dawn on 7 Sep 43 when I heard a crash and an explosion. I thought it was an air raid and went to ground. Then I heard screams and went down to see what I could do but could not get very close to the trucks on the marshalling area on account of very big flames. There were parts of scattered aircraft all over the place and trucks in flames. As soon as the flames had subsided sufficiently together with a number of others I went down and assisted in getting the bodies out of the trucks. We got out what bodies we could but we could not get them all on account of the fierce blaze. The injured were got away as soon as possible. At about daylight together with others I looked for some means of identification of bodies. Each of those who was left ~~xxxxxx~~ was in no way identifiable from anything that could be found on them or near them even though any one of them had been my best mate I could not have identified them. We searched around for other means of identification and any items of personal belongings were taken to the orderly room but none of them were in such a position in relation to the bodies that any one would be able to say that it belonged to any particular individual and the things that we did pick up were so charred that it could not give any clue to the identity. I counted twelve bodies all of which could not be identified. They were put on a truck. I could only identify three of them as being Australians by their boots. A further five were later got out of the front cabins of the trucks and they were put on a truck and sent away. This made seventeen men not identified. We were not able to get these five men out of the cabins until much later in the morning as the trucks were still blazing fiercely.

Harry Lewis Davies

His evidence is read over to the witness

SX693 Pte Harry Lewis Davies being recalled on his former oath makes the following additional statement :-

In my evidence above I stated that there were definitely twelve bodies in the first truck. On reconsidering the position I say that there were only eleven bodies. It was not possible for me to make a very accurate check as parts of the bodies were all over the truck and at the best it was only an estimate.

Harry Lewis Davies

Further evidence read over to the witness.

QX37566 Pte Malcolm Graeme GELDARD , HQ 18 Aust Inf Bde being duly sworn gives the following evidence :-

After the crash on the morning of 7 Sep 43 I was detailed to count the number of recovered bodies which had been placed in a three ton truck. Owing to the state of the bodies and their positions in the truck it was difficult to make an accurate check, but after a careful count I found there were eleven bodies.

M. Graeme
.....
PO

His evidence is read over to the witness

QX 37566

QX6135 Lieut Charles Ronald Reid 2/12 Aust Inf Bn being duly sworn gives the following evidence :-

On the morning of 7 Sep I was on the scene of the aircraft accident and I saw 2 bodies, in the front of the leading truck facing towards control room. It was the truck on its side.
I knew Capt Ferguson and on looking at one of these bodies I saw from the shape of his head that it bore a strong resemblance to Capt Ferguson.

*C. R. Reid Lieut
QX6135*

His evidence is read over to the witness.

QX11374 Cpl Alan Francis HARTLEY, HQ 18 Aust Inf Bde, being duly sworn gives the following evidence :-

I produce sketch plan the information for which and the sketch of which was done under my control. To the best of my knowledge and belief the information thereon is true in substance and in fact.

(Sketch plan annexed to proceedings and marked 'O'.)

Alan Francis Hartley
.....
Off.

His evidence is read over to the witness.

QX11374.

NUMBER	RANK	NAME	UNIT	ADMITTING DIAGNOSIS+
NX34090	Lieut	McTaggart	F.M. 2/33 Bn	Burns
NX12925	Capt	Mitchell	D.A. " "	"
NX28925	Lieut	Sadgrove	H.C. " "	"
QX3873	Pte	Condon	J. " "	"
NX58770	"	Hughes	E.L.B. " "	"
NX81833	"	Rice	H.J. " "	"
VX113110	"	McFadzean	R.E. " "	"
NX8233	"	Whitmee	P.W. " "	"
VX90771	"	Clarke	C.J. " "	"
NX79625	"	Preston	J. " "	"
QX4667	Sgt	Cleary	C.M. " "	"
NX169474	Pte	McCrome	A.G.E. " "	"
NX96806	"	Hancock	D.A. " "	"
NX99188	"	McGhie	G " "	"
NX86395	Cpl	Turnbull	D.A. " "	"
SX2006	Pte	DUNSTAN	E " "	"
NX85178	"	Stubbs	W.J. " "	"
NX97234	"	Burnett	C.R. " "	"
NX28758	"	White	K.J. " "	"
QX33214	"	Tidbury	A.L. " "	"
NX91676	"	Watson	D.L. " "	"
NX97021	"	Oberg	F.T. " "	"
NX96759	"	Wright	W.G. " "	"
NX98150	"	Evans	F.T. " "	"
NX43723	"	Johnston	H.T. " "	"
NX86167	"	Byrnes	C.J. " "	"
NX97625	"	Shade	T " "	"
QX36625	"	Finglas	B " "	"
SX17465	"	Mills	P.H. " "	"
QX7355	"	McGrow	J. " "	"
NX54152	"	Buskell	N.A. " "	"
NX86126	"	Tumeth	F.G. " "	"
NX19921	Dr	Fernley	H.L. 2/33 AustG.Tpt	"
VX80717	Pte	Marshall	D.J. 2/33 Bn	"
NX92691	"	Furnance	A " "	"
VX109882	"	Durie	F.L. " "	"
NX3005	"	Shallcross	J.E. " "	"
NX37326	Cpl	Drane	A.E.A. " "	"
NX146015	Pte	Harley	W.S. " "	"
NX97206	"	Tripp	J.C. " "	"
NX81163	"	Collins	M.W. " "	"
QX3154	"	Horton	M.F. " "	"
SX18075	"	Halford	W " "	"
NX89628	"	Byron	J.D. " "	"
NX33644	"	Fewings	E.R. " "	"
NX100776	"	Garnon	F " "	"
VX125069	"	Lilley	W.J. " "	"
QX38693	"	Garrett	A " "	"
NX37325	"	Crawford	N.H. " "	"
SX17638	"	Lithgow	W.L. " "	"
NX99084	"	Ralston	R.F. " "	"
VX113123	"	Callander	D.A. " "	"
NX80827	Cpl	Hamilton	H " "	"
SX1616	Pte	Munro	A.R. " "	"
VX91283	"	Donohoue	H " "	"
NX95056	"	Myers	A.C. " "	"
VX80414	"	Hinwood	H " "	"
VX122632	"	McLeod	O.K. " "	"
NX39846	"	Smalley	E.J. " "	"
QX34862	"	Shiels	R.A. " "	"
NX80187	"	Devenport	M.R.L. " "	"
NX92130	"	Alexander	W.T. " "	"
N199319	Dr	Kearines	V.W. 158 AGT Coy	"
VX77454	Pte	Wilson	J. 2/33 Bn	"
DX21	"	Mackrill	J " "	"
QX24856	L/Cpl	Lewis	N.E. " "	"
SX18013	Pte	Ling	J.N. " "	"
NX32267	Pte	Turnbull	L.H.W. " "	"
NX32179	"	Cook	L.J. " "	"

NUMBER	RANK	NAME	UNIT	ADMITTING	DIAGNOSIS
NX97042	Pte	SMITH	W 2/33 Bn		Burns
NX89776	"	Gambrill	A.W.	" "	"
SX18977	"	Swift	D.V.	" "	"
NX50334	"	Stanton	B	" "	"
NX37163	A/Cpl	Keys	M.V.	" "	"
NX141881	Pte	Smith	C.H.B	" "	"
QX38521	"	Morgan	M	" "	"
NX36851	"	Hickey	J.T.	" "	"
VX68750	"	Roberts	P	" "	"
QX33350	"	Nixon	J.A.	" "	"
VX8615	Cpl	Snow	S.A.	" "	"
NX18491	Pte	Workman	R.J.	" "	"
SX17755	L/Cpl	Lewis	F.W.	" "	"
NX150539	Dr	Donovan	E.R. 158	Aust Gen Tpt	"
QX2252	Cpl	Tinning	W 2/33 Bn		"
QX29674	Pte	Joseph	J.W.A.	" "	"
NX44673	"	MacMurray	C.E.	" "	"
VX124806	"	McDermott	J	" "	"
QX29660	"	Stutz	E.J.	" "	"
NX44040	"	Waring	A.H.	" "	"
NX55437	"	Musgrave	W.A.	" "	"
NX55295	"	Ellis	F.C.	" "	"
QX38173	Pte	Swayn	F.C.	" "	"
NX41651	"	Gorman	C.H.	" "	"
VX2929	Sgt	Beck	J.T.	" "	Shock
NX8104	"	Crooks	W	" "	Shock & Burns
NX45067	A/Cpl	Laing	J.J.	" "	" "
SX2307	S/Sgt	Henschke	K.A.	" "	Shock & Bruised Thigh
NX26936	Pte	Gilwey	A	" "	Burns
NX122155	"	Bull	C.R.	" "	"
NX37094	"	Thompson	J.C.	" "	"
N256180	Dr	Silkman	J.A. 158	Aust Gen Tpt Coy	"
NX97019	Pte	Bailey	W.E. 2/33 Bn		"
NX80932	"	Tinson	C.J.	" "	"
NX89529	"	Lawson	F.T.P.	" "	"
SX 18051	"	Mildwaters	C.J.	" "	"

NUMBER	RANK	NAME	DATE OF DEATH
NX89776	Pte	Gambrill	A.W. 7 Sep 43
QX33350	"	NIXON	J.A. 7 Sep 43
NX18491	"	Workman	R.J. 7 Sep 43
QX34862	"	Shiels	R.A. 7 Sep 43
VX113110	"	McFadzean	R.E. 7 Sep 43
SX18977	"	Swift	D.V. 7 Sep 43
VX80414	"	Hinwood	H 7 Sep 43
NX97042	"	Smith	W 7 Sep 43
VX77454	"	Wilson	J 7 Sep 43
NX141881	"	Smith	C.H.B 7 Sep 43
NX32179	"	Cook	L.J. 7 Sep 43
DX21	"	Mackrill	J 7 Sep 43
NX36851	"	Hickey	J.T. 7 Sep 43
NX39846	"	Smalley	E.J. 7 Sep 43
N199319	Dr	Kearines	V.W. 8 Sep 43
NX80187	Pte	Devenport	M.R.L. 8 Sep 43
NX50334	Pte	Stanton	B 8 Sep 43
NX95056	"	Myers	A.C. 8 Sep 43
NX37163	A/Cpl	Keys	M.V. 8 Sep 43
VX68750	Pte	Roberts	P 8 Sep 43
NX81833	"	Rice	H.J. 7 Sep 43
VX122632	"	McLeod	O.K. 9 Sep 43
QX7355	"	McGrow	J 9 Sep 43
NX58770	"	Hughes	E.L.B. 7 Sep 43
VX8615	Cpl	Snow	S.A. 11 Sep 43
SX17755	L/Cpl n	Lewis	F.W. 8 Sep 43

DEAD ON ARRIVAL

NX15257	A/Cpl	Weston	W.F. X 171 American Hospital
N256189	Dr	Taranto	J.V. X Jacksons Drome
SX18057	Pte	Milwaters	C.J. x 171 American Hospital
SX17640	"	Miller	K.A.G. X Jacksons Drome

15 UNIDENTIFIED BODIES X Jacksons Drome

(COPY)

M

HEADQUARTERS
FORTY THIRD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Ordnance Officer

VPB/joc

APC 929
10 Sept., 1943.

SUBJECT: Cause of Detonation of Fuzed Bombs in Airplane Crash.

TO : Commanding Officer, 43rd Bombardment Group (H), APC 929.

1. A B-24 airplane of the 403rd Bombardment Squadron, 43rd Bombardment Group crashed just beyond the end of the runway at Jackson Drome, at approximately 0430 hours on the morning of 7 Sept., 1943.
2. The plane carried four (4) 500# Demolition bombs with AN M103 nose fuzes and AN M101A1 tail fuzes, .025 sec. delay. The bombs were fuzed and the safety pins were in the fuzes.
3. Witnesses stated that the bombs exploded within a few seconds of the crash.
4. An investigation by the writer showed that the bombs exploded with a high order detonation by impact with the ground and not by the fire that resulted. The plane struck the ground on the side of a slope and there was some burned wreckage at this point. At a point about ten (10) yards farther up the hill near the top, there were three craters from five (5) to eight (8) yards apart and about ten (10) yards from more burned wreckage. There was no burned wreckage at the point where the bombs exploded.
5. The fourth bomb laying on the top of the hill not far from the craters had an arming nose fuze in it, having had the cap retaining the safety blocks knocked off. The tail fuze had the stem broken off but the part holding the inertia slug was in place and this fuze was not in an armed condition. The shear wire had not been broken in the nose fuze and both fuzes were removed by the writer.
6. It is the opinion of the writer that on impact with the ground, the bombs broke through the wreckage knocking off the caps of the nose fuzes that retain the safety blocks. On tumbling and rolling for the next few seconds, the striker head of three of them hit the ground and detonated the bombs. The striking head in the fuze of the fourth bomb did not hit the ground.

VINCENT P. BERGER,
Capt., Ord. Dept.,
Ordnance Officer.

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NX137997	Pte	VILLA	C.F.	D.I.
VX90997	Pte	ROBINSON	H.D.	D.I.
NX8932	L/Cpl	PEARSON	R.W.	DIED
VX91436	Pte	MCGARVEY	M	DIED
NX33021	L/Cpl	STEELE	A.A.	
NX52095	Cpl	PRICE	E.A.	S.I.
NX47747	E/Cpl	WARD	R	D.I. DIED
NX46058	Pte	O'REGAN	F.T.	DIED
NX ^M 346042	Pte	MORAN	H.E.	D.I.
NX96055	Pte	PRESTON	H.R.	DIED
VX90974	Pte	RICHARDSON	J.R.	DIED
SX2149	Pte	BREAKWELL	A	DIED
NX31802	Pte	CAFE	E.W.	D.I.
DX116	Pte	STEW	A.W.	DIED
SX28936	Pte	HARVEY	D.J.	DIED
NX99208	Pte	DANIEL	M.B.	S.I.
NX80121	Pte	BRESSINGTON	F	DIED
SX11227	Lieut	BUTTHOS	I.K.	S.I.
QX34036	Pte	SMITH	G.W.	D.I.
VX78975	Pte	BIRD	H.F.	DIED
QX1585	WO 11	HEINKE	J.R.	DIED
QX32523	Pte	MCGREGOR	D	DIED
QX2854	Pte	SMITH	F.R.	DIED
SX18963	Pte	LONG	A.G.	DIED.