

WAR DEPARTMENT  
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HEADQUARTERS 315TH BOMB WING  
 APO #247, c/o Postmaster  
 San Francisco, California

Account No. 45-2 10-507  
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WAR DEPARTMENT  
 U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

(1) Place Provisional Army Air Base #2 APO 247 (2) Date 10 February 1945 (3) Time 0745  
 AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-29 (5) Army No. 42-65255 (6) Station Provisional AAB #2  
 Organisation: (7) 20AF, XXI B.C. (8) 505th Bomb Gr. (9) 43rd Bomb Sqdn.  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

| DUTY | NAME<br>(Last Name First)    | RATING | SERIAL No. | RANK    | PROFESSIONAL CLASS | BRANCH | AS FOUNDED ON COMMAND | RESULTS TO PILOT/CREW | USE OF PARACHUTE |
|------|------------------------------|--------|------------|---------|--------------------|--------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| (10) | (11)                         | (12)   | (13)       | (14)    | (15)               | (16)   | (17)                  | (18)                  | (19)             |
| 1A/C | Quay, Edward J.              | P      | 0-668696   | 1st Lt. | 01                 | AO     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| 2P   | Lake, John F.                | P      | 0-828910   | 2nd Lt. | 18                 | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| 3W   | Petah, Victor J.             | AO     | 0-698337   | 2nd Lt. | 01                 | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| 5B   | Mosack, Richard W.           | AO     | 0-1101972  | 1st Lt. | 01                 | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| 6TE  | Reek, Franklin J.            | AO     | 0-868828   | 2nd Lt. | 18                 | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| 7RO  | Valala, Salvatore            |        | 32417801   | S/Sgt   | 38                 | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| 7BO  | Lora, Don S.                 |        | 38387458   | Sgt     | 38                 | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| 7CFC | Hughes, Paul A.              |        | 18159901   | Sgt     | 38                 | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| 7O   | Kemper, Jack R.              |        | 13187797   | Sgt     | 38                 | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| 7O   | Lapark, Robert V.            |        | 13141708   | Sgt     | 38                 | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| 7O   | Krivonak, John               |        | 33762283   | Sgt     | 38                 | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |
| HX   | Baker, Roscoe F. (bystander) |        | 34099317   | Pvt.    | 1                  | AC     | 20 AF                 | Fatal                 | none             |

PILOT CHARGED WITH ACCIDENT

(20) QUAY, Edward J. (21) 0-668696 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 01 (24) AO  
 (Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Professional class) (Branch)  
 Assigned (25) 20 AF, XXI B.C. (26) 505th Bomb Gr. (27) 43rd B. Sq. (28) 20 AF  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Attached for flying (29) 20 AF (30) 505th Bomb Gr. (31) 43rd B. Sq. (32) 20 AF  
 (Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)  
 Original rating (33) P (34) 12/13/42 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 2-18-45 Instrument rating (37) none  
 (Class) (Class) (Rating) (Date) (Class) (Date)

First Pilot Hours:

(38) This type 132:55 (39) Instrument time last 6 months  
 (40) This model 132:55 (41) Instrument time last 30 days  
 (42) Last 90 days 62:45 (43) Night time last 6 months  
 (44) Total 1769:10 (45) Night time last 30 days

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

| DAMAGE            | (46) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| (46) Aircraft     | W 4 4 4 4                  |
| (47) Engine(s)    | W 4 4 4 4                  |
| (48) Propeller(s) | W 4 4 4 4                  |

(49) Weather at the time of accident Contact EH

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No  
 (52) Cleared from PROV AAB #2 (53) To Combat mission (54) Kind of clearance contact

(55) Pilot's mission combat

(56) Nature of accident Take-off

(57) Cause of accident Undetermined. Exploded. No evidence of any type available to determine primary cause of accident.

RESTRICTED

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

(This narrative of accident is based on report of responsibility and recommendations for action to prevent repetition)

Aircraft was loaded with eight (8) 500 lb G.P. bombs and two (2) 500 lb incendiary bombs. On take-off the airplane acted normally to all witnesses until approximately two-thirds of the way down the 8500 ft runway. At this point although nearly airborne the power was reduced and one application of the brakes was made. Flaps were dropped to the full down position and the nose wheel lifted clear off the ground as though in an attempt to increase the drag. This action at such high speed caused the lift to momentarily increase resulting in the left main wheels losing contact with the ground for a short distance. About 1200 ft from the end of the runway the brakes were again applied and apparently kept on. The airplane was slowed down to an estimated 40 MPH by the time the end of the runway was reached. No attempt was made to turn onto the taxiway, which could have been accomplished successfully. The airplane ran off the end of the runway and down a slope (this down grade estimated at 2%). A mound of dirt and coral approximately ten feet high and seventy feet long was hit. As the aircraft went up this mound it broke in two, fell on the far side and immediately exploded. There were no survivors. One bystander, approximately five to seven hundred feet away was killed by flying debris. The aircraft was so completely demolished that investigation to determine any reason why the Airplane Commander decided to stop his take-off roll was impossible. No reason can be afforded for failure of the airplane commander to turn the airplane onto the taxiway at the end of the runway.

Responsibility: UNDETERMINED.....100%

*George G. Cook*  
 GEORGE G. COOK  
 Major, Air Corps  
 Member

*Dean C. Forburger*  
 DEAN CLIFFORD FORBURGER  
 Capt, Air Corps  
 Member

*Edward T. Scott*  
 EDWARD T. SCOTT  
 1st Lt., Air Corps  
 Member

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Board Proceedings
2. Photographs

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DATE 12 Feb 45

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Investigating Officer)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

HEADQUARTERS 313TH BOMBARDMENT WING  
APO #247, c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, California

360.33

12 February 1945

PROCEEDINGS OF AIRCRAFT INVESTIGATION BOARD  
FOR ACCIDENTS

The Board convened on 12 February 1945 at Provisional Army Air Base #2, APO #247, pursuant to Special Order No. 14, paragraph 2, as amended by Special Order No. 25, paragraph 4, this headquarters, for the purpose of examining witnesses and determining cause of the aircraft accident involving B-29 airplane #42-65255.

First Witness, MAJOR VERNON BOCOCK, 505th Bombardment Group, Gp Engineering O.

MAJ COOK: Major Boccock, you saw the attempted take-off of airplane #42-65255 on the morning of 10 February 1945. Will you give the board your observations?

MAJ BOCOCK: I was standing mid-way between runway #1 and runway #3 on the east taxiway. I was watching the take-offs of all the planes. First, I noticed the airplane was when it came into view at the end of the runway. I estimate the speed of the plane at approximately 35 miles per hour. The brakes of the plane were on. I could tell by the way the dust was scuffing up behind the wheels. The plane headed directly toward the end of the runway and seemed to slow down somewhat. Then it went off the runway over an incline and hit an embankment approximately 500 feet away. When it hit, the plane broke in two, folded up and fell over on the opposite side. The moment it fell the bombs exploded.

MAJ COOK: Could you judge about where the fuselage broke in two?

MAJ BOCOCK: Right aft of the wing, about ten feet.

MAJ COOK: Do you believe the plane hit the mound of earth at same speed it left the runway?

MAJ BOCOCK: It had only slowed down a little. It probably hit at about 25 miles per hour.

LT SCOTT: Did you notice if the wheels were in a down position (I mean as though they were holding back and the plane was straining forward)?

MAJ BOCOCK: Yes, I believe they were.

MAJ COOK: Have you any comments on maintenance problems encountered with this plane?

MAJ BOCOCK: No comments.

LT SCOTT: Did you notice any manipulations of the throttle?

MAJ BOCOCK: No, they seemed to be all the way back the whole time.

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MAJ COOK: Had the plane made any previous missions?

MAJ BOCOCK: I don't know.

MAJ COOK: Since you were standing on the eastern taxiway, can you estimate how many vehicles were there and what type?

MAJ BOCOCK: I would say there were about 10 in the vicinity on both sides of the taxiway -- jeeps and 6 x 6's.

Second Witness, LT. J. R. BUCKLEY, 905th Bombardment Group, Ordnance Officer.

MAJ COOK: You are the Group Ordnance Officer of the 905th Bombardment Group, Lt. Buckley. Will you give the board the bomb load of airplane #42-65255.

LT BUCKLEY: Eight (8) Composition B General Purpose Bombs, (500 lb).  
Two (2) M76 Incendiary Bombs (500 lb)

MAJ COOK: Were these bombs armed?

LT BUCKLEY: No they were not.

MAJ COOK: Can you give a feasible reason as to why they detonated?

LT BUCKLEY: My personal opinion is that the gasoline exploded first and set off the bombs. When the explosion occurred I was standing three-quarters of the way down the runway.

MAJ COOK: Could 500 lb GP bombs be detonated as a result of damage to the fuse?

LT BUCKLEY: Only if the vane cap of the nose fuse is off. It is possible for this cap to be broken off by a glancing blow. When this happens, the fuse is armed. Then a blow on the striker would detonate the bomb.

MAJ COOK: Did you find any bomb shackles?

LT BUCKLEY: No, I don't believe one was found.

MAJ COOK: Could the lifting force of the plane crash tear off the bombs?

LT BUCKLEY: It might. However, the bombs have a spring arrangement on the bomb rack. I would not know just how much of a jar it would take to shake the bombs loose. The shackle could be broken, however, as it is constructed to withstand a maximum force of only 1600 lbs.

MAJ COOK: From your position, did you notice any difficulties the pilot was having as he passed you?

LT BUCKLEY: I noticed that the throttle was cut back just before reaching the last part of the runway.

Proceedings of Aircraft Accident Investigation Board of 12 Feb 45.

MAJ COOK: Did the pilot use his brakes?

LT BUCKLEY: I would say he did not appear to be using his brakes.

LT SCOTT: Did you notice if he tried to use his emergency brake?

LT BUCKLEY: No. As he reached the end of the runway he seemed to pull the end of the nose up.

MAJ COOK: Did he put more flaps down?

LT BUCKLEY: I did not notice.

CAPT MEIGS: Did he seem to be having any engine trouble?

LT BUCKLEY: I didn't notice any trouble he might be having.

MAJOR COOK: Could you see the pilot?

LT BUCKLEY: No, I did not see him.

Third Witness, CAPT F. H. FITZGERALD, 483d Bombardment Sq, Engineering Officer

MAJ COOK: As Squadron Engineering Officer will you give us some comments on the maintenance difficulties that were encountered with the airplane which might have caused this accident?

CAPT FITZGERALD: The airplane was one of our best. We had no particular problems with it. Main problem was a burned out landing gear motor. One instrument had to be changed -- a temperature indicator. The ship aborted once due to the propeller governors. New prop governors with modified clips were installed in it. This ship was on the Kobe strike. Each of the 4 engines had 90.25 hours on them. A fuel pressure signal and defroster motor had to be replaced. We worried quite a bit about the fuel consumption on this plane. It required more power to keep up with other planes. The gross weight of the plane at take-off was 133,000 lbs. Low nose oil pressure on #2 engine was noticed by crew chief. Crew chief and instrument specialist bled the lines and pressure was brought back up to normal.

MAJ COOK: What was Form 1A status of the plane?

CAPT FITZGERALD: It was on red diagonal for cracked running light glass and the drift meter was precessing slightly. We had it on emergency requisition.

MAJ COOK: Was it the first time you had had trouble with nose oil pressure?

CAPT FITZGERALD: Yes, it was the first trouble we had.

MAJ COOK: When was the ship last flown prior to the date of accident?