

From Lockbourne to Heaven in a B-47

Honoring Four Lives Given in Service to America

Compiled by Chris Jenner, August, 2008



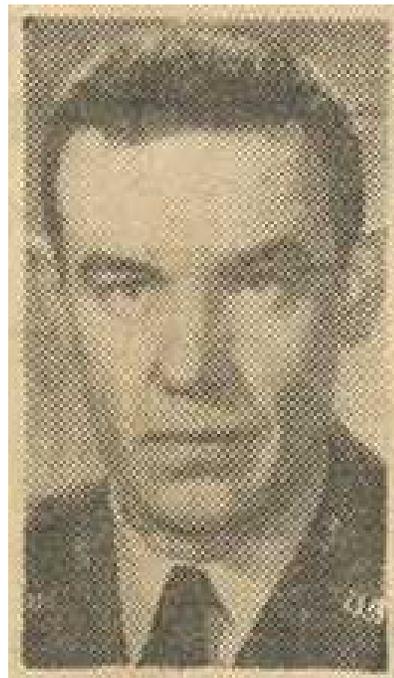
Ist Lt. George M. Reiley



Ist Lt. Alvin B. Storey



Ist Lt. Earl N. Fogle



Ist Lt. Theodore L. Jenner, Jr.

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Introduction

February 26th, 1958, returning to Lockbourne AFB from a routine training mission, an RB-47 slammed into the ground about 25 miles southeast of the base. The crash occurred near a gas plant and a house, but missed directly hitting any structure or gas line. All four aboard were killed instantly. The flight commander was my father, 1st Lt. Theodore L. Jenner, Jr.



I had been told at an early age that my father was in the Air Force, had been killed in a crash, and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery. In 1977, I learned more details of what happened. I was given a “scrapbook” assembled by my step-grandfather in the days following the crash. In the 1990s, as the Worldwide Web grew, I picked up an occasional tidbit about the crash, and stories and reports about B-47s in general.

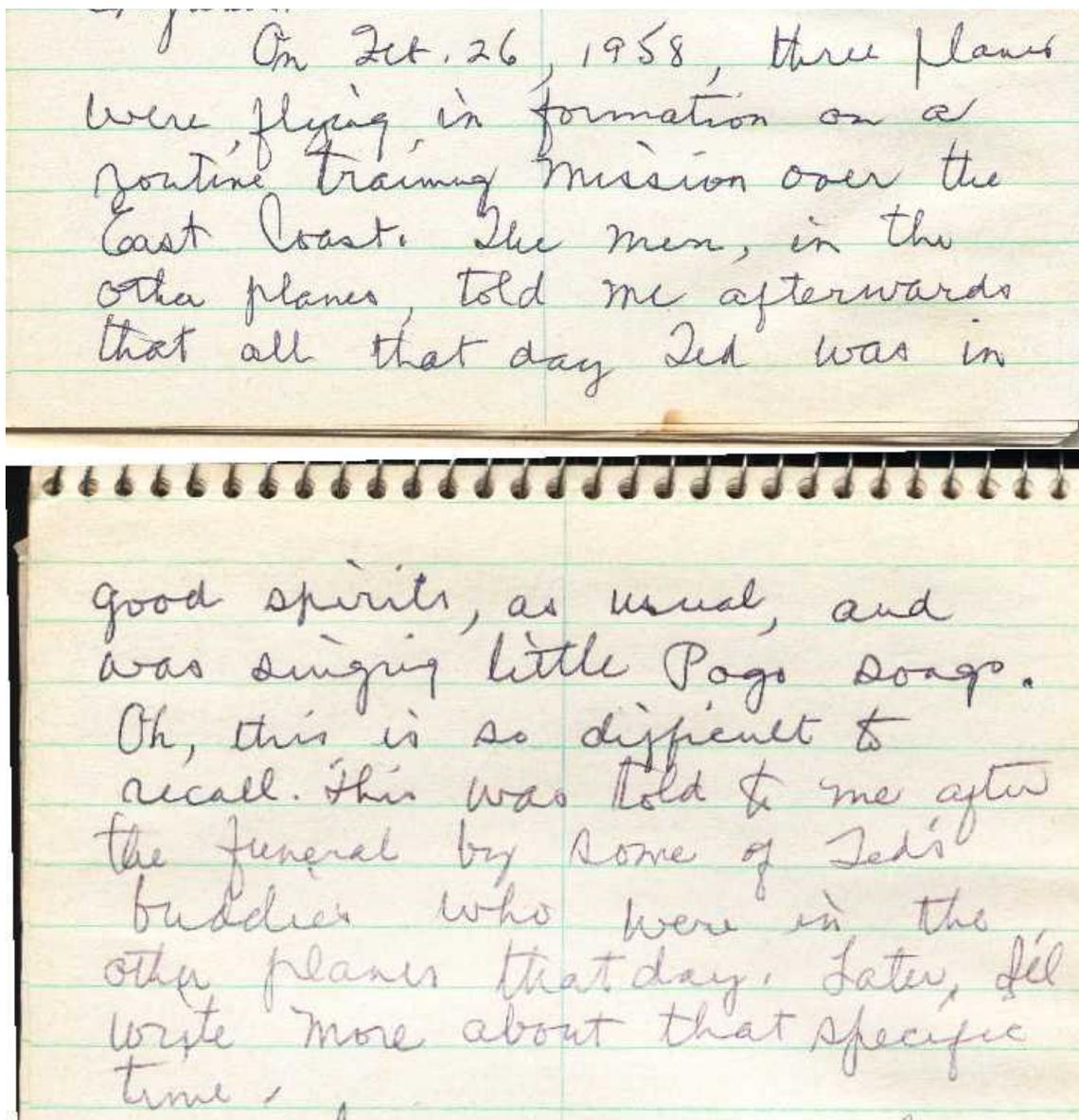
Then in early 2008, I discovered the vast wealth of genealogy resources that had become available via the web. While researching my family history, I decided to search “February 26th, 1958” and “B-47”. Among the returns were a couple message board postings that referred directly to my father’s crash. I eventually was able to contact both posters, who had first hand knowledge of the crash.

Two of the other three men that died near Sugar Grove, Ohio, that day each had a young child. Like me, these children would be in their early 50s today. Ever since I’ve known this, I’ve wondered how their lives turned out, and what became of them and their mothers in the years since.

I’ve included here everything I’ve collected over the years. I thank everyone who has shared to help me bring this together, and have listed all sources at the end. I welcome further contributions, please email me at cjenner00@yahoo.com.

First Hand Accounts

Recounting her "memoirs" in 1996, Lt. Jenner's mother wrote...



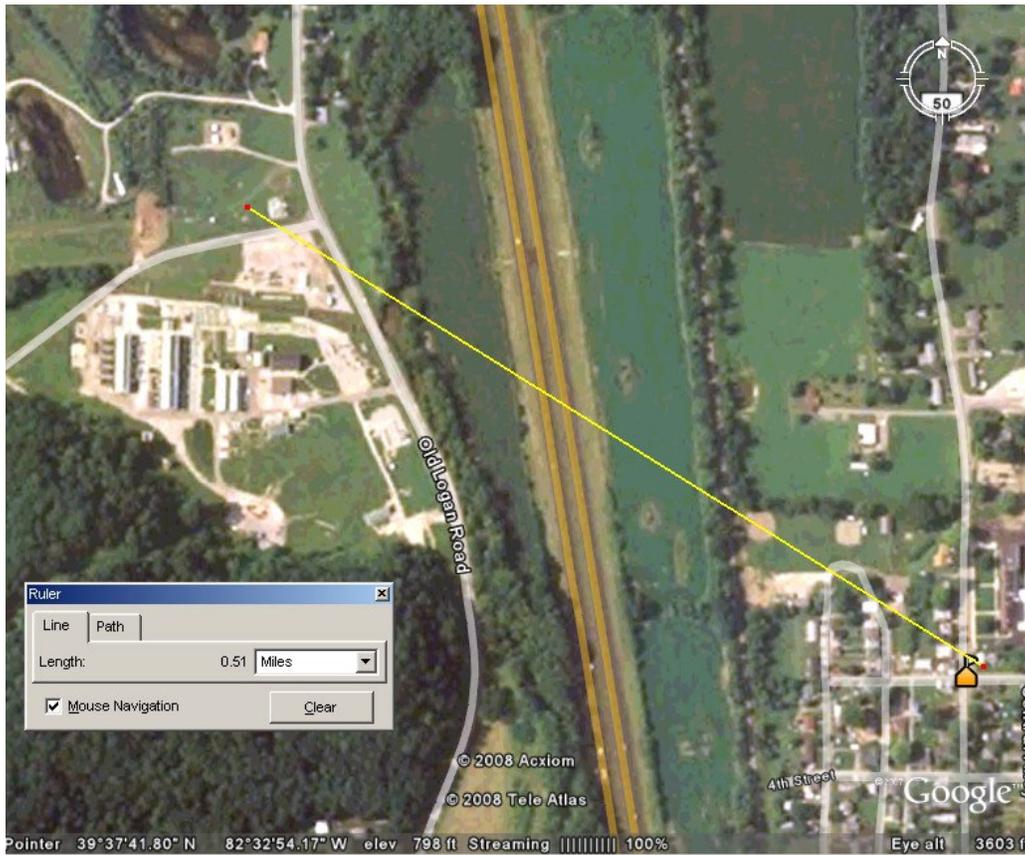
On Feb. 26, 1958, three planes were flying in formation on a routine mission over the east coast. The men in the other planes told me afterwards that all that day Ted was in good spirits as usual, and was singing little Pogo songs. Oh, this is so difficult to recall. This was told to me after the funeral by some of Ted's buddies who were in the other planes that day. Later, I'll write more about that specific time.

If she did write more about it, I have yet to find it. The day after the crash, a newspaper article reported she was en route from Evanston, Illinois, to Columbus. Helen Bruckschen, Ted's mother, passed away recently, on April 24, 2008, at age 99, just over 50 years after her son died.

Mary Vance was a sixth grader in a classroom that faced the site of the crash. In internet postings and emails to me in early 2008, she wrote...

I was in the sixth grade at Berne Union School in Sugar Grove, Ohio and witnessed the crash. The aircraft flew over the village fast, low and loud. It crashed about 0.75 mile from us, missing a large Ohio Fuel natural gas pumping station by a few hundred feet. The impact was at the NW corner of Old Logan Rd. and Pump Station Rd. The crash was just a tremendous fireball and left behind nothing more than pieces and a crater. I recall that they brought in a crane to retrieve what was said to be pieces of the engines that were embedded in the ground.

The area was pretty much cordoned off, the site cleared, and that was it. We never heard much about it after that. Over the years I have tried to find information about the crash and those in the plane with very little success. I would like to know about your father and his fellow crew members. I have always felt that the reason the plane didn't hit the pumping station was due to the heroics of the men on board. I am so sorry that you lost your father that day. 03/26/2008 @ 14:49 [ref: 20245]



Above is a Google Earth map showing the view from Berne Union School in Sugar Grove to the crash site.

Mary Vance returned to the crash site in March, 2008, spoke to some people and took some pictures. The picture below is of what she was told is the approximate point of impact.



Contrast that with an excerpt from a panoramic picture that ran in the Columbus paper the day after the crash. One of the Ohio Fuel Gas Company's buildings that was there at the time of the crash still stands in 2008, and can be seen in both pictures.



Internet search engines also turned up this posting on <http://www.b-47.com/GB3.htm> :

Date: 11/13/2003 **Time:** 10:23:53 AM

Comments

Hey there, glad to see someone keeping the old flame alive. I was stationed at Lockbourne AFB in Columbus, Ohio from 1957-1959 and worked on the B-47 in the 3rd srw under line chief M/S Vance. There were good times and bad, we had one plane (not from our group) crash on the base and one go in at Lancaster, Ohio. Sorry to say both flight crews never made it. 6 men total. Keep up the good work, I will look forward to checking in from time to time. Anyone wanting to contact me can do so at ddherm@swbell.net

4 1/2 years later, on a whim, I emailed ddherm@swbell.net , and Dan Herman and I have had a very enlightening email exchange ever since. His first reply was well beyond my expectations.

Wed, 12 Mar 2008 12:18:57 -0700 (PDT)
From: "Dan Herman" <ddherm@swbell.net>
Subject: Re: Feb 26, 1958 B-47 Crash
To: "Chris Jenner" <cjenner00@yahoo.com>

hello, hi. I just got your e-mail and was glad to hear from you. I am sorry but the AF never let us know the name's of any crew member's that died on any of the planes that went down so if you weren't a member of the ground crew you did not know their names.

I did however go to Lancaster, Ohio, which is just a short distance NE of the base and help retrieve a downed B-47. If this is the one that you lost your father in I am sorry for the loss to your family.

There is not a lot to talk about on the accident, it was very cloudy that day with a very low overcast, it would rain off and on that day. I was on the flight line that day when we got the word that one of the planes from the base had went in and all members on board had died and that no one had got out. I and several others from the base had to go and retrieve what was left and bring it back to the base and lay it out on a hanger floor the way it was supposed to be if it were in the plane.

Now for what I saw, the plane was really no more and we found out later that when it left radar it was traveling at a 45 degree angle under power from 5000ft. now here I have to tell you that the reason it was under power was because the approach chute was out and this is because when you did touch and goes with those planes you used the chutes to make you keep the engine's at a higher RPM so that you would not have a flameout on any of the engine's during take off again. Those old J-47 engines were bad about that if the rpm's got to low and you pushed the throttles forward to fast, it would drown the engine.

More from Dan later in the section on what caused the crash.

On the same site I ran across Dan Herman was another interesting posting, although it was over five years old:

Date: 2/18/2003 **Time:** 11:18:37 AM **Remote User:**

18 Feb 03 Ran into your website by accident. Was an old RB-47 and B-47E co-pilot from 1956-59. Flew out of Lockbourne AFB, Ohio. ... Good luck and keep the website coming. Lt/Col Don Mortensen (USAFret) (annxdon@connect2.com)

I emailed Lt. Col. Mortensen to see if he knew anything of the crash or the men killed. He provided a very informative response.

From: "Don Mortensen" <annxdon@comcast.net>
To: "Chris Jenner" <cjenner00@yahoo.com>
Subject: Re: Lockbourne AFB, 1958
Date: Mon, 26 May 2008 13:04:43 -0600

Hello Chris:

This must be a special Memorial Day for you, as it probably is every year. I'm touched by your desire to know more about your father and the circumstances of his death. My condolences for your loss. I hope your life has been fulfilling otherwise.

You've certainly conjured up many memories for me. My wife and I spent many happy years at Lockbourne AFB. We moved there in Sep 1956, after completing all the required courses needed to qualify one to crew and fly the B-47, including a couple of weeks at Stead AFB, NV, enduring the Escape and Evasion School, there.

Yes, I'm sure I remember the accident your father was in. It was very sobering to all of us. We all felt much more vulnerable after that, but continued to man the aircraft and play whatever role we were assigned in the great Cold War.

If it is the same accident I'm thinking about, and I don't recall any other major accident while I was stationed there, it included another young pilot named Coates, who was in my squadron and lived very close to us. As a result, there was a Commanders Call shortly after and we were all told to keep our wives informed of our finances. It seems that the men assumed that responsibility and when an accident like that happened, the wives were totally unaware of their financial circumstances. This, along with the grief and trauma experienced required some time for some of them to get on with their lives. I immediately turned the finances over to my wife and for past 55-years have relied on her. Now, I'm afraid, if something happens to her, I will be totally befuddled for the same reason.

Although the threat of such an accident was never out of our minds, it was still never expected and when it did, it jolted us back to reality. As I remember, the flight your father was on, was beginning a non-precision letdown from their flight, using the Amanda beacon for their approach. That took them out over part of southeastern Ohio, in a large loop while descending from the higher altitudes and put them on a heading for the LAFB.

If you're not familiar with the procedure, the Amada beacon was just outside of the little town of Amanda, south of Lancaster, Ohio. This letdown procedure, using a radio-navigation instrument, would indicate when you passed over the beacon. Then the pilot would throttle back and turn to a precise heading, and begin losing altitude at a given rate. The heading took you out and away from the beacon until reaching a prescribed distance from the beacon, then a standard turn was made back to the beacon. After passing over the beacon for the second time at a designated minimum altitude the aircraft took a heading that would take it directly to the AFB.

I don't remember what the final report attributed the accident to, but it seems that from the nose-low angle of the impact with the ground and the huge crater it left that there must have had some problems with its flight controls. My wife and I drove out to the accident site a few days after and I recollect the high angle of the aircraft easily seen on the tree branches that were sheared off as it plunged into the ground.

I googled up some maps of the area and tried to pinpoint the exact location of the accident, but things have changed a bit there, but the name of the town, Royalton came to mind. Not much of a town, it was really just a crossroads. I know when I walked around the accident site, it impacted very close to the farmhouse, but I don't remember seeing any serious collateral damage to the structure. Not sure if there were people living there at the time.

So what caused the crash?

Between newspaper articles about the crash and email exchanges from people familiar with it, there is a lot of speculation as to the cause. While considering the speculation, I obtained the official Air Force Accident Report. Here are the official "Findings" from the report.

FINDINGS

1. The primary cause factor which made this accident most likely or inevitable was operator error in that most probably the aircraft was allowed to reach an unusual attitude and/or high speed from which there was no recovery.
2. A contributing cause factor was materiel failure in that the forward landing gear wheel well doors failed in flight and most probably created a distraction to the aircrew.
3. A contributing cause factor was existing weather conditions in that it was impossible for the operator to maintain a safe aircraft attitude by reference to other than the aircraft instruments.
4. A contributing cause factor was possible vertigo most probably induced by rapid transition from flying close formation to flying instruments under actual instrument conditions.
5. A contributing cause factor was possible fatigue in that the aircrew had flown close formation under adverse weather conditions on a high priority mission.

Certainly I found the "primary cause factor" in the official report disappointing. Some of the eyewitness reports call this finding into question. We'll see later from an eyewitness that the landing gear wheel well door "failure" probably created a lot more than a "distraction." Finally, the commander responsible for the alleged "operator error" had been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for actions performed two years earlier. His DFC citation reads:

First Lieutenant Theodore L. Jenner distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flights during the year 1956. During this period, Lieutenant Jenner performed, under exceptional conditions, flights which were of the greatest importance to the United States Air Force. The effectiveness and courage exhibited by him in the accomplishment of these missions, under extremely hazardous flight conditions, ably demonstrated Lieutenant Jenner's outstanding proficiency and steadfast devotion to duty. In the performance of these missions of vital significance to the United States, he has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

My father had landed the same aircraft in far more adverse conditions than were present over central Ohio that day. His biography which appears later includes details of the landings that earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross. That alone calls the finding of operator error as the prime cause factor into question.

Here is more from Dan Herman regarding the cleanup of the crash.

Now back to the plane, when we got there there was no plane just a field of junk. The plane had just missed a booster station for a natural gas pipeline. If it had hit it, there probably would not have been anything to find. There was an old house that was to the west of the crash site that no one lived in, and the whole east side of the house was full of holes. We found several parts in the house and one of the hydraulic units for one of the ailerons in the attic.

Where the plane hit there was a hole that was about 30-35 ft deep and we dug another 28 ft to find the engines and the navigators' section. The plane was scattered over about 300 yds in all directions, and I am sorry to say that we could not find any bodies but just pieces of them. The largest was a foot. I am not going to say anymore if you don't want it, because I find that it still makes me sad to remember.

We did find one of the forward wheel well doors about 5 miles from where the plane hit. You could tell that it had fallen off and not blown off. When the inspectors got thru with the plane they had decided that the door had broken loose while they were doing a go around, flew back and hit one of the elevators, and that it had jammed in the down position causing the plane to nose dive into the ground. They [the crew] did not hardly know what happened before it hit the ground.

Those old 47's were electrical and hydraulic controlled flying fuel cells and if they ever went in there was not much left. I hope I was able to help you some, and most of all I hope that I did not cause any heart ache. My best wishes to you family.

Dan D. Herman U.S.A.F.

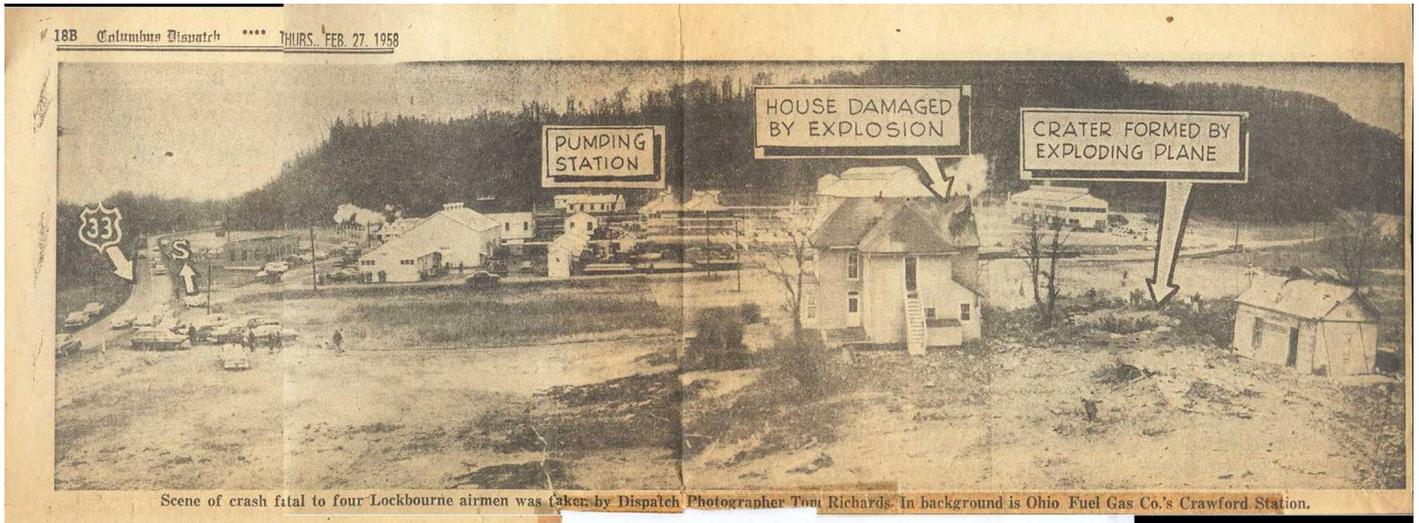
Finding #2 from the official report said the wheel well door "failure" "probably created a distraction to the air crew." Some distraction. After receiving the official report and reading finding #2, I was curious and asked Mr. Herman the source of the information about the wheel well door failure. His response makes me further question the conclusion of the official report.

That's what the team said that was inspecting the planes remains. There were 4 or 5 officers there, and probably 5 or 6 airmen and 2 or 3 nco's if my memory serves me right. Most of the people just came to look. There were 2 officers, 1 NCO, 1 airman and myself that 2 inspectors told what probably happened. Also there was a report about it laying on a desk in our hangar. I cannot this many years later say for sure if it was an official report because they didn't keep anything out for long.

Our company commander told us that each and every plane would have all the wheel well doors checked and while we were at it we could check all removable panels and chute doors. They even had the pilots check the door links before flights and that went on for about a month or so.

In May of 1958, the Air Force announced it was withdrawing its entire fleet of 1,500 B-47s on a rotation basis “for modification because of a “structural failure” indicated in a recent accident.” This appeared in an article from a May 3, 1958, Minneapolis newspaper that continued, “Since the beginning of this year the B-47 has been involved in 14 crashes with 34 casualties. Eighteen B-47 crew members have been killed in five accidents since March 21.”

Photos and Articles about the Crash



Chicago Daily Tribune THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1958
THE WORLD'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER

Four Die in Ohio Jet Bomber Crash

CRASH OF JET BOMBER KILLS FOUR IN OHIO
(Picture on back page)

Lancaster, O., Feb. 28 (AP)—A six jet strategic air command RB-47 reconnaissance bomber crashed and exploded six miles south of this central Ohio community today, killing four crew members.

Col. William Rudell, air force officer investigating the crash, said the plane was stationed at Lockbourne air force base near Columbus and was on a training flight. The only identified dead from Chicago had was 1st Lt. Theodore L. Jenner, 26, commander of the plane, from base near Evansston, Ill. He died on the base with his wife, Janet May, and their infant child.

Witnesses said the plane plunged low over a hill then crashed into an unoccupied house and near an unoccupied station. The crash tore a huge crater in the ground and scattered bits of wreckage over a wide area.

Firemen pouring water into crater where strategic air command jet reconnaissance bomber crashed and exploded near unoccupied house in Lancaster, O., killing four crew members. The crater was 28 feet deep. (Story on page 18)

[Associated Press Wirephoto]

From the Lancaster Eagle Gazette, February 27, 1958 (thanks Dale De Long for obtaining this on microfiche from the Fairfield County Library)

Lancaster Eagle-Gazette

YOUR NEWSPAPER SINCE 1809

National FFA
Week Is
Feb. 22-March 1

LANCASTER, OHIO, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1958

40 PAGES

7c PER COPY

Seek Plane Crash Cause; 4 Dead

Jet, On Training Flight, Just Misses Ohio Fuel Gas Station

U. S. Air Force personnel worked today to clean up wreckage and determine the cause of the crash of an RB47 Strato jet bomber that killed four crewmen yesterday afternoon, six miles south of Lancaster and 500 feet north of the Ohio Fuel Gas Co. compressor Station.

Probers were searching the gaping, 100 by 60 foot hole, where the six-engine jet bomber buried itself.

Sugar Grove Folks Heave Relief Sigh

Many people in the Sugar Grove area heaved a sigh of relief yesterday, when the RB47 six engine jet bomber did not crash into the middle of the Ohio Fuel Gas Co. Compressor Station.

L. D. Gretter, 312 N. Maple St., engineer-in-charge of the station, at the time of the crash, and who saw the giant bomber roar over the plant, said, "It could have been real bad if that plane had struck within the grounds and not 500 feet further to the north."

Mr. Gretter said it would have depended on just where the bomber would have crashed at the station, if it had, before any estimate of destruction could be known.

"We have fire valves protecting the plant, but there could have been an explosion," he said.

"It would have been a mess, regardless," he declared.

When the plane crashed, there were between 25 and 27 men working at the station. Many of them saw the explosion as the bomber hit the earth.

Others said they saw debris flying "all over the place."

Mrs. Charles Sterling, Sugar Grove, who lived in the house near where the plane crashed, said she and her husband and three children moved from it in November.

"I'm still shaking," she said today. "I can't help thinking about what would have happened to us if we had still lived there."

Most of the debris from the plane fanned out for 1,000 feet from the gaping hole where the plane buried itself.

Pieces of the plane were discovered in the Stuckey Cemetery.

(Turn to page 25, column 4)

They also scoured a 1,000 foot area, picking up small pieces of the plane, which Air Force officials at the scene said "just disintegrated on impact."

An Air Force Helicopter flew into the area late last night and searched for wreckage. It was still there this morning and was reported by deputies to be flying over a wide area.

Officials of the compressor station said Air Force photographers were also taking pictures of the entire area.

Sgt. W. D. Braucher, of the Columbus post of the State Highway Patrol, said today that as far as he knew the Air Force had not determined the cause of the crash and that the giant 90-ton airplane was on a routine training mission.

The plane, he said, had been in contact with the Lockbourne Air Force Base control tower near Columbus and had been cleared for an instrument let-down from a high altitude to a normal landing approach, and that the crew members reported no difficulty.

Sgt. Braucher said Air Force personnel had informed him that the RB47s stationed at Lockbourne normally come in over the general Lancaster area in the vicinity of 20,000 feet, then start a rapid descent to approximately 4,500 feet for landing at the Lockbourne field.

Witnesses of the crash, employees at the compressor station, told Air Force officials that the plane roared out of low hanging overcast, swooped over a steep hill just south of the station and rammed into the soft earth in a very steep dive.

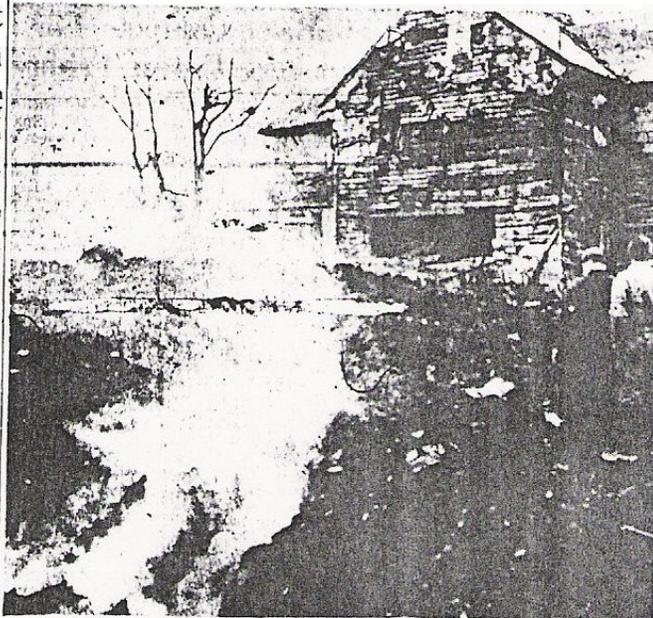
The dead, all first lieutenants, were identified by the Air Force as Theodore L. Jenner, 26, Evanston, Ill., aircraft commander; George M. Kelley, 25, Hyattsville, Md., pilot; Earl N. Fogle, 27, Pittsburgh, Pa., navigator and Alvin B. Story, 25, Charlotte, N. C., an additional pilot aboard for training.

by searchers was a six-foot strip of metal. Most of the scattered pieces was no bigger than a woman's handbag.

Col. William Rudell, Col. James Lovett and Major William E. Pedigo were all at the crash scene yesterday, and Col. Lovett and Major Pedigo returned today.

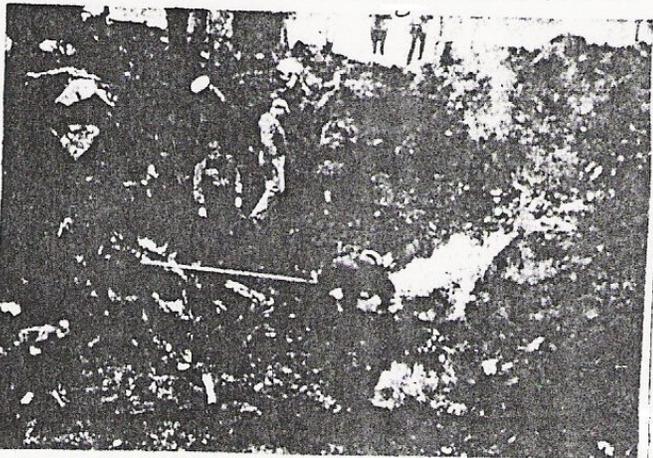
Maj. Pedigo is safety director for the 26th Strategic Reconnaissance

(Turn to page 25, column 3)



UNOCCUPIED HOUSE BADLY WRECKED

THE LARGE house in the background was unoccupied, and badly wrecked when the Air Force jet bomber crashed yesterday. Berne Township firemen are shown at right as they looked at the crater where the bomber plunged, killing four crewmen. The house is owned by Monroe Weiss, Fredericktown, O. (Eagle-Gazette Staff Photo by Duke Ellis)



DEEP CRATER PROBED FOR EVIDENCE

U. S. AIR FORCE personnel are shown above as they probed the huge, 100 by 60 foot crater, 28-feet deep, where the RB47 six-engine jet bomber plowed into the earth yesterday afternoon south of Lancaster. The man bending over in the center of the crater is the Lockbourne Air Force Base fire chief examining bits of wreckage in the center of the hole.

(Photo by Fred Hammel, Lancaster)

Seek Cause Of Plane Crash

(Continued from Page One)

sance Wing and the crashed plane was from his unit, he said.

The unit, Pedigo reported, belongs to the Strategic Air Command (SAC).

FAIRFIELD COUNTY sheriff's deputies and auxiliaries, state highway patrolmen from the Lancaster post, and local patrol auxiliaries were first on the scene.

Air Force officials commended them for their fine cooperation in keeping unauthorized personnel away, directing traffic and aiding in the taking of statements from witnesses.

Deputy Sheriff Ned Webb and Sheriff's Sgt. Elwood Phillips reported that several people tried to pick up pieces of the wreckage, but were told to put them down immediately.

Cpl. Roger Wilson of highway patrol was at the scene and reported that traffic along U. S. Rt. 33 was extremely heavy.

Shortly after the crash, authorities re-routed all automobile traffic off the highway and sent it through Sugar Grove. Only trucks were allowed to pass through.

Normal traffic was again allowed on Rt. 33 shortly after mid-night.

The plane, plowed into the earth about 20 feet behind a large, unoccupied house owned by Monroe Weiss, Frederickstown. The house was formerly the home of Service Safety Director Russell Evans.

Lt. Jenner, Storey and Fogle were married and each of them had one child. Lt. Storey lived at Obetz, while the other two lived on the base.

Lt. Relley, a bachelor, lived in Columbus.

Witnesses to the crash were Reese Carpenter, Rockbridge; Ernest Rine, Ulca, O.; Harold S. Dowler, 328 Reber Ave., William Mathias, Rockbridge, all employes of the compressor station or construction crews at the station.

L. D. Gretter, 312 N. Maple St., engineer-in-charge at the station and Russell Sheets, Sugar Grove, chief engineer, said they saw the plane but that their view of the actual crash was obstructed.

However, they reported they saw the fire and debris falling.

Dowler told State Patrolman D. E. Roberts that he saw the whole thing, from the time the plane dove in over the hill until it crashed in a mushroom of fire and smoke.

Berne Township firemen were at the scene almost immediately and sprayed water on the burning wreckage and prevented the log-constructed Weiss house from burning.

The entire rear of the house was shredded by the impact and explosion, but it was only slightly scorched by fire, firemen said.

The interior of the home was smashed badly, they reported.

A ground crewman from Lockbourne, who said he knew the dead men well and worked with them, told Sheriff's Sgt. Russell Miller last night that he had been with the men just before they took off from the base yesterday morning.

Air Force officials described the RB47 as a medium range bomber in the 600 mile-per-hour classification.

They said it could fly above 40,000 feet, had a range of 3,000 miles, had a 118 foot wingspan and a fuselage 106.8 feet long.

Sugar Grove Folk Are Relieved

(Continued from Page One)

tery, which lies to the north of the Weiss home.

Burl Nafzger, Sugar Grove Rt. 1, operator of a gas service station on U. S. Rt. 33, approximately a mile south of the crash, said he did not see the plane but did "see a ball of fire to the west. I heard the plane."

An Air Force official said what Nafzger may have seen was one of the jet's engines sending out a vapor or smoke trail.

Credit: Ohio Exploration Society

[http://www.ohioexploration.com/orphanFrame.htm?http://www.ohioexploration.com/historicallo
ckbourneafb.htm](http://www.ohioexploration.com/orphanFrame.htm?http://www.ohioexploration.com/historicallo
ckbourneafb.htm)



Probe On In Fatal Jet Crash

A team of accident investigation experts was due here today to probe the crash of a Lockbourne Air Force Base RB-47 that took the lives of four men Wednesday.

Dead are:

Lt. Theodore Jenner, aircraft commander. Jenner, 26, lived with his wife, Janet May, and one child in Wherry Housing at Lockbourne.

Lt. George M. Reiley, pilot, 25, 243 N. James-rd.

Lt. Earl N. Fogle, 27, navigator. He lived with his wife, Sarah, and one child in Wherry Housing on the base.

Lt. Alvin B. Storey, pilot being checked out in the plane and fourth man of the crew. Lt. Storey, 25, lived at 154 Groveport-rd, Obetz, survived by his wife, Frances Ann, and one child.

The big six-jet plane was returning from a training mission and had been cleared for a landing at Lockbourne. Ground personnel in radio contact with the airplane said there was no indication of trouble before the crash.

MOST WITNESSES who saw

(Turn to Page 2 Column 1)

Seeks Cause Of Four Deaths

Fatal Jet Crash Probed

(Continued From Page 1)

the aircraft come out of the low clouds over the crash scene said it did not appear to be in trouble.

The landing was being made under normal procedures, which require a first report at 22,000 feet above Anchor-Hocking airport, a circle turn and descent to 16,000 feet and another turn and continued altitude loss until 3500 feet is reached, again near Anchor-Hocking airport.

FROM THAT POINT, a radar landing system, Ground Control Approach, takes over and guides the plane to the ground. (All Strategic Air Command landings are normally made by GCA in all types of weather.)

A ferry pilot flying in the area about the time of the crash reported the overcast extended from about 3500 feet to 11,000 feet.

IT INDICATED the pilot of the Stratojet, which was probably descending about 5000 feet a minute through the overcast, would ordinarily have about 30 seconds to take action before striking the ground if he broke through the overcast in too steep a descent.

But the next pilot to land using the SAC procedures said he came out of the overcast 6000 feet above the ground. This indicated to investigators that weather was probably not a factor in the crash.

Apparently no pieces had come from the plane before it hit and no fire was seen prior to the crash. It hit the ground at about a 45-degree angle.

"I HEARD a loud crash and looked up and there was flame everywhere," said G. O. Burke, of Lancaster, who was "about as close as a man could be" (about the length of a football field) to the accident.

"Bits of metal flew everywhere. A big piece came right at me, but it fell before it got to me."

THE PLANE missed the Crawford Pumping Station of the Ohio Fuel Gas Co. by 600 feet, hitting directly behind a vacant house. The house had



Lt. Jenner Lt. Reiley



Lt. Fogle Lt. Storey

been occupied until about two weeks ago, but was being remodeled. The explosion set fire to one side of the house.

Pieces of the exploding plane went as far as 1000 feet and riddled roofs of homes across Rt. 33, 700 feet away. The remains of one of the crash victims was found 700 feet from the crash site.

INVESTIGATORS said no piece of the plane larger than six feet in diameter was found.

The blaze following the crash was quickly brought under control by Lancaster firemen. Apparently there was only a comparatively small quantity of jet fuel remaining in the airplane.

THE CRASH was 10 3/4 miles from a radio navigation facility north of Lancaster over which the plane would have passed on its approach to the base. It was 23 1/2 miles from the Lockbourne runway.

Investigators were due here from Norton AFB, California; the Oklahoma City Air Materiel Area, and Boeing Airplane Co., Wichita, Kas.

They made an appeal for any witnesses to the crash to call Lockbourne TEmple 3-8211, extension 7500.



House at crash site was sprayed by parts and flaming fuel. Investigators here probed crater for any clues to cause of crash.



Plane narrowly missed Ohio Fuel Gas Co. pumping station over hill seen behind the pumping station.

... six-jet plane was re-
... from a training mission
... been cleared for a land-
... Lockbourne. Ground per-
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... was no indi-
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THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1958

A.F. Bomber Crashes; 4 Die

Lancaster, O. (UP)—A sleek six-engine RB47 Air Force jet bomber crashed and burned in a field six miles south of here yesterday, killing four crew members.

The plane, based at Lockbourne Air Force Base at Columbus, was returning from a "routine" training mission. Air Force spokesmen said four airmen were aboard the craft.

THE PLANE PLOWED into the ground some 30 feet from an empty farmhouse near Sugar Grove, a small community south of here on U.S. 33.

Witnesses said the plane passed only 30 feet above an Ohio Fuel Gas Company pumping station and exploded before hitting the ground.

Highway Patrol Cpl. Roger C. Wilson reported "we saw a big ball of fire, and then the explosion shook everything."

THE AIR FORCE immediately sent a team of investigators to the scene and clamped a tight net of security around the scene. However, witnesses said the plane created a crater about 25 feet deep in the field.

Debris from the crash scattered in an area probably 500 feet from the spot of the crash. An eyewitness said the plane came over a hill at treetop level and made a vertical dive into the ground.

Clark Francis Fleming of the gas company said the plane exploded on contact, but another witness said the explosion took place in the air.

FLEMING SAID, "We saw a big ball of fire, and fire flew 30 to 40 feet in every direction."

He said the explosion "shook everything" in the pumping station but caused no damage.

Ex-Broad Ripple Pupil Killed in Ohio Jet Crash

A former Indianapolis resident was killed near Lancaster, O., in the crash of an Air Force jet bomber of which he was commander.

Lt. Theodore L. Jenner, 26, now of Evanston, Ill., was killed along with three other crew members when the RB47 plane plunged to earth and exploded in a field while returning from a training mission.

Lt. Jenner was graduated from Broad Ripple high school in 1949.

Surviving are his widow, Janet; a son, Chris; his mother, Helen Jenner, Evanston; a grandmother, Mrs. J. Frank Jenner, 5345 E. Washington, and a grandfather, Ira Correll, formerly of Bedford, now living in Texas.



Jenner

Indianapolis Paper 2/27/58

Ex-City Resident On Crashed Jet

A 26-year-old Air Force officer who grew up in Indianapolis was one of four crew members killed when a six-engine RB47 Air Force jet bomber crashed and burned in a field near Lancaster, O., yesterday.

He is 1st Lt. Theodore L. Jenner, formerly of 5809 Norwaldo Avenue. Word of his death was received here from his mother, who now lives at Evanston, Ill. She telephoned friends that she had received notification from the Air Force.

Lt. Jenner, who was valedictorian of the 1949 graduating class at Broad Ripple High School, according to friends of the family, reportedly was crew chief of the plane.

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LT. JENNER attended Hanover College a year and a half before entering the Air Force.

Lt. Jenner's mother, Mrs. Leslie O. Bruckschen, was reported en route to Columbus last night. His father, the late Theodore L. Jenner Sr., died 11 years ago.

Other survivors include the widow, Mrs. Janet Jenner; a son, Chris Jenner, 18 months old, and his grandmother, Mrs. J. Frank Jenner of Indianapolis.

Lt. Jenner Buried In Arlington Cemetery

Special military rites were held at 10:00 a.m. yesterday at Columbus, Ohio, for Lt. Theodore J. "Ted" Jenner of Evanston, Ill. Burial was in the Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D. C.

Lt. Jenner was commander of a plane which crashed Wednesday afternoon near Lancaster, Ohio. Jenner and the other three crew members aboard were killed.

Lt. Jenner was born in Bedford but later moved to Indianapolis, where he was valedictorian of the 1949 graduating class at Broad Ripple High School.

Indianapolis Star

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1958

4 Deaths In Jet Landing Probed

Columbus, O. (INS)—A team of aviation experts is coming to Lockbourne Air Force Base to investigate the crash of a giant, six jet-engine Stratojet in which four men died.

Killed in the RB47's crash near Lancaster, O., Wednesday were:

First Lt. Theodore L. Jenner, 26 years old, of Evanston, Ill., the aircraft commander; 1st Lt. George M. Reiley Jr., 25, pilot, son of George M. Reiley, Hy-

attsville, Md.; 1st Lt. Earl N. Fogle, 27, Pittsburgh, Pa., the navigator, and 1st Lt. Alvin B. Storey, 25, Charlotte, N.C.

Lockbourne officials said the long-range photo reconnaissance plane was returning to the base after a routine training mission. The plane was minutes away from the landing strip and the crew had been in contact with the control tower with no report of difficulty, when the crash occurred.

Memorial Rites Held For Jet Crash Victims

Memorial services were held today at 10 a. m. at Lockbourne Air Force Base for the four crewmen killed in the crash of an RB47 Strato jet bomber south of Lancaster Wednesday.

Meanwhile, investigators from Norton AFB, Calif., the Oklahoma City Air Material Area, and Boeing Airplane Co., Wichita, Kans., as well as Lockbourne, were probing the crash scene today, still trying to determine the cause of the \$2-million aircraft's plunge into the ground, 500 feet north of the Ohio Fuel Gas Co. Compressor Station.

A/1c J. P. Bystery releasing information on the crash at Lockbourne today, said he could not say how long the investigation would continue, or if all of the wreckage from the plane would be removed from the scene.

Killed in the crash were: 1st Lt. Theodore Jenner, 1st Lt. George M. Reiley, 1st Lt. Earl N. Fogle, and 1st Lt. Alvin B. Storey.

A/1c Bystery said he was uncertain whether the families of the dead airmen would hold funeral services.