

B-17F #42-5287

April 25, 1943

In the early morning hours of April 25, 1943, Boeing B-17F #42-5287 took off from Gowen Field, Idaho, for an instrument and practice bombing training mission. The aircraft headed east as it climbed, and began a left hand turn to circle back over the field. The pilot was unable to see approaching terrain in the dark, and at 1:30 a.m. the bomber struck a 5700 ft. ridge north east of Boise. It broke in half, crashed into a ravine, and burned.

Lt. Raphael R. Strauss, navigator, started down the mountain to get help. At sunrise he followed the sound of church music coming up the canyon on Easter Sunday. On the outskirts of Boise he met a rescue team from Gowen Field. The men included Lt. James Stewart, the Hollywood actor, who was training as a B-24 pilot at Gowen. Stewart gave his flight jacket to Strauss to stay warm as he led the rescuers to the crash site.

Miraculously, six crewmen survived with injuries. Three gunners in the rear of the aircraft, S/Sgt. Walter F. Stocklas, S/Sgt. Allen B. Vincent, and S/Sgt. Robert H. Kingsbury, were killed. The pilot, Flight Officer Horace V. Carpenter, died of his injuries in the hospital two days later.

USAAF removed the large pieces of wreckage after the crash, but today many small pieces are scattered down the mountain side. Special thanks to Craig Fuller, Miriam Strauss, and Jennifer McDonald for help with finding this crash site. Site visited on 6/19/19.

Crew:

Pilot	F/O Horace V. Carpenter	Lufkin, TX
Co-Pilot	2nd Lt. Craig W. Harrington	Greensboro, NC
Navigator	2nd Lt. Raphael R. Strauss	St. Paul, MN
Bombardier	2nd Lt. Herbert H. Smith	Chicago, IL
Engineer	S/Sgt. Clarence M. Nelson	Santa Ana, CA
Assistant Engineer	S/Sgt. George J. D'Amato	Calverton, NY
Assistant Radio	S/Sgt. Walter F. Stocklas	Ewing, NJ
Gunner	S/Sgt. Allen B. Vincent	Livingston, LA
Gunner	S/Sgt. Robert H. Kingsbury	Cameron, TX



Debris field



Heavily reinforced riveted piece



Part of a practice bomb



An aluminum screen



A piece of fuselage



A piece of aluminum framework



A steel control rod



Part of a gauge



A toggle switch



A view of the ridge the aircraft struck



Pilot F/O Horace V. Carpenter
(Courtesy of the Carpenter Family)



Co-pilot 2nd Lt. Craig W. Harrington
(Courtesy of the American Air Museum in Britain)



Radio Operator-Gunner S/Sgt. Walter F. Stocklas
(Courtesy of the Stocklas Family)



Navigator 2nd Lt. Raphael R. Strauss
(Courtesy of Miriam Strauss, his wife)

