

McDonnell-Douglas RF-4C #65-0904

May 17, 1990

On the evening of May 17, 1990, RF-4C #65-0904 took off from Boise Air Terminal, Idaho, as part of a three-aircraft flight. In the front seat was pilot Maj. Gordon Ravencroft, and in the rear seat was crew chief S/Sgt. Robert Hatten. The men and aircraft were with the 190th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 124th Tactical Reconnaissance Group, of the Idaho Air National Guard. This was S/Sgt. Hatten's first flight in a fighter jet, and the "incentive flight" included aerial tanker refueling, a high-altitude supersonic run, and a low altitude segment north of Boise, Idaho. While returning to the airfield, the aircraft suffered a flight control malfunction that caused it to roll inverted. With the ailerons not responding and the nose dropping rapidly, Maj. Ravencroft applied hard right rudder to roll the aircraft upright. Seeing that they were too low to attempt a safe dive recovery, Maj. Ravencroft activated the rear ejection seat and then his own. The RF-4C struck trees and impacted mountainous terrain about 30 miles north of Boise, Idaho. Both men's parachutes functioned normally and they survived with injuries. A rescue helicopter picked the men up shortly afterward. Today numerous small pieces of #65-0904 are scattered over a wide area. Special thanks to Chris Baird and Craig Fuller for help with locating this crash site. Site visited on 10/15/22.















Maj. Gordon Ravencroft (Courtesy of Chris Baird)



RF-4C #65-0904 in flight before the accident (Courtesy of Chris Baird)

