

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

SUBJECT VENTURA AIRCRAFT R.A.F. NO. AE942:

ACCIDENT TO ABOVE ON 3-6-43 P O S.N.

LANGDALE, SGT. F.R. CARTER, SGT. R.F. BRIER

& SGT. F.J. STILLING, ALL MISSING.

FOR CROSS REFERENCES SEE INSIDE COVER

DIRECTED TO		DIRECTED TO		DIRECTED TO							
REGISTRY POINT	STAFF OFFICER P.A. OR B.F.	DATE	INITIALS	REGISTRY POINT	STAFF OFFICER P.A. OR B.F.	DATE	INITIALS	REGISTRY POINT	STAFF OFFICER P.A. OR B.F.	DATE	INITIALS
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1700-1014
100-0-100
1300-1014-1
100-1-100
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100-0-100 (100)

Ottawa, Canada, 22nd September, 1944.

REGISTERED

New Zealand Air Mission,
Liaison Building,
Ottawa, Ontario.

NZ423896 L.A.C. Glenday, N.M.
P/O Langdale, S.M. (NZ424554)
NZ416456 Sgt. Carter, F.R.
NZ424967 Sgt. Brier, R.F.

1. Attached hereto are copies of Proceedings
of Court of Inquiry or Investigation in the case of the
above mentioned personnel.

(P.K. McDougall)
Wing Commander
R.C.A.F. Records Officer.

Encl. 50

100-1070-1 (10)

Ref: 100-1070-100
Date: 12th Aug, 1943

12th August, 1943

Air Officer Commanding in Chief,
Eastern Air Command, HQ,
Wallops, E.S.

Investigating Officer's Report -
Incident to Ventura A1942 from No. 7
S.F.S., Wentworth Ridge, on 1 June/43.

The proceedings of the investigation into the above
noted accident have been approved by this Headquarters.

[Signature]
(F.S. Wilkins) G/C
for C.I.S.

W.S./10

[Handwritten mark]

*Notes
Wentworth Ridge
12/8/43*

MEMORANDUM

1300-AB942-1 (AIB)
21st August, 1943.

A.H.F. (D.G.F.)

Investigating Officer's Report -
Accident to Ventura AB942 from No. 34
O.F.U., Pennfield Ridge, on 3 June/43.

1. This accident is beyond understanding. Why a pilot would fly so far off course in daylight without attempting to reach land apparently cannot be explained. The failure of signals was probably due to lack of skill on the part of the W.A.G. and the pilot and navigator became completely lost and apparently finished up in the sea.



(F.S. Wilkins) G/C
C.I. Accidents.

SUMMARY OF ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION - NO. 997

Date and Time	Aircraft	Unit	Occupants	Injuries	Place of Accident
3rd June/43 Exact time Unknown	Ventura II A3042	#34 O.F.U., Pennfield Ridge	P/O S.N. Langdale (Pilot) Sgt. Carter, P.R. (Nav.) Sgt. Brier, R.F. (M.A.G.) Sgt. Stiles, P.J. (A.G.)	Unknown believed fatal " "	Unknown

Object of Flight

Formation day training flight.

Weather

6/10 of heavy cumulo-nimbus cloud based at an estimated 3,500' with 1 to 3 tenths ragged cloud at 2500 ft. Visibility 1 1/2 miles. Winds at 5,000 to 6,000 ft. would be approximately 300° at 20 - 25 m.p.h. In the heavier cumulo-nimbus clouds the turbulence would be severe. Icing index would be light to moderate, clear icing above 11,000 ft.

Pilot

P/O Langdale's flying time as follows:-

	Night Fly.		Instr. Fly.		Within 6 mo. previous
	Dual	Solo	Dual	Solo	
Total	2:45	1:15	2:05		
DH 82	8:10	9:00	21:30		150:20
Crans					6:15
Anson					39:55
Ventura	12:35	12:35	2:05	11:00	

His instructor stated that he was a safe, steady pilot with no outstanding faults and his instrument flying was better than average.

Description of Flight

P/O Langdale, pilot, with Sgts. Carter, Brier and Stiles, took off at 1640 hours (GMT) in Ventura A3042 to carry out formation day training flight for one hour and 30 minutes.

W/O2 Harris, pilot, took off in Ventura A358 to fly in formation with P/O Langdale. He states as follows:- "I took off first and he then followed me off. He pulled into formation about five minutes after take off. We climbed up in formation on a heading of 045 until we reached the cloud base which was approximately 2,500'. We flew under the cloud base for approximately 15 minutes. During this time we did several turns, keeping within the local flying area to the N.W. of the aerodrome. The clouds were about five-tenths in that area and as it was very busy I decided to climb above them. We levelled out at 6,000'. I then led the formation down to the coast. As we approached the coast the clouds below us thickened. I then made a turn to the right and followed the coast line back to the airport. Seeing a very large clear spot in the area bounded by the airport, Lake Vicypis, Saint Andrews, I led the formation into it and then gave P/O Langdale lead of the formation. He then turned to the right and flew on a heading of approximately 045 passing North of the airport which was plainly visible to us and my Navigator. We flew on for several minutes and he did a turn to his right and flew on to approximately 135° and continued on his course. The tops of the clouds were building up and we were flying through very light clouds. We finally broke through one of these clouds and a very dark cloud loomed up above us. He immediately went into a climb without giving a signal, consequently I dropped about two lengths behind him. On entering a cloud I lost sight of

him, as I immediately turned away from him to the right, turning 180° bringing me back out of this cloud. About a minute later I saw his emerge from the cloud to the S.W. of me. He then turned towards me, I continued on my course. Our height at this time was approximately 6,500'. We were still flying through a light broken cloud and he passed under me, and then turned to his left and passed very close underneath me. I then began a turn to my left to rejoin the formation. At this time his Wireless Operator called up and wanted to break the formation. I immediately turned to my right towards our airport on a course of about 330°, and descended down to 2,000' below the cloud base and flew directly home. It took me approximately 15 minutes to reach the airport and land." WO2 Harris further stated that he did not strike any icing condition on the flight.

In answer to the question "Can you give any opinion as to what may have caused the disappearance of this aircraft?" WO2 Harris stated: "I would say that it is possible that he had reversed his compass."

An extensive and intensive search was carried out for the missing aircraft and crew but no trace was found.

Findings of Investigation

AIRCRAFT

Ventura A3042 took off 1640 hours GMT with Ventura A3048 to carry out local formation flying. Ventura A3058 landed at 1800 hours after breaking formation at a point between 30 and 40 miles S.W. of aerodrome. The aircraft was last seen flying due South and failed to return."

Cause:

"The cause of the accident is very obscure."

Recommendations:

"Nil."

Conclusions of Accident Investigation Branch

Aircraft and crew failed to return from a day formation practice flight for reasons not disclosed in the evidence. Evidence is lacking as to the inspection and condition of instruments prior to the flight.

It is considered that the occupants of aircraft A3042 may reasonably be presumed dead.

K. C. Pappell R/107
(K.C. Pappell) P/L

1. Sgt. Brer, V.A.O., was considered of average ability.

2. The only recorded communications between the aircraft and the Unit Control Tower were by R/T as follows:- 1641 hours - taxi clearance; 1650 hours - take-off clearance; and 1651 hours - airborne and changing to formation R/T frequency.

3. At 1650 hours, when the aircraft was 50 minutes overdue, W/T section was ordered to try and contact the aircraft but the evidence does not disclose the result of this action.

4. The aircraft's R/T was functioning when the two aircraft broke formation.

A. B. Williams
(P.A. Williams) O/C
C.I. Aerodrome.



RECEIVED
DATED

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

Attention: A.T.S. Halifax, N.S., 22nd June, 1945.

The Secretary,
Department of National Defence for Air,
Lisgar Building,
Ottawa, Ontario.

1300-AC742
AIB

Accident - Ventura Mk II AE942
Missing - 3rd June, 1945 - Pennfield Ridge.

FILE MADE
JHR
CR 3

1. Three copies of the proceedings are enclosed herewith, as New Zealand personnel are involved.
2. Two copies are being sent to No. 12 Group, one for their files and one for the station at Pennfield Ridge.
3. The missing crew is as follows:

NZ424584	S. K. Langdale	NZ416456	Sgt. P. R. Carter
NZ424567	Sgt P. F. Erier	R164116	Sgt. P. C. Stiles

G.A.P. Erickenden
(G.A.P. Erickenden) S/Lt.,
for A.C.C.-in-C., R.C.A.F.

[Handwritten mark]

CONFIDENTIAL

R.C.A.F. DA
Form 5-43 (2077)
REV. 1952-4-6
Obsoleted 5-17

CANADA

PROCEEDINGS OF COURT OF INQUIRY OR INVESTIGATION FLYING ACCIDENTS

THE MEMBERS OF THE COURT OF INQUIRY (The Officer conducting the investigation) CERTIFY AS FOLLOWS:—

(A) That the following instructions have been read and understood:

1. The Findings which the Court or Investigating Officer are called upon to make should be kept clearly in view in conducting the inquiry.
2. It must be borne in mind that the Findings (including an opinion as to the cause of the accident and the degree of responsibility and any recommendation for the future) must be based upon and supported entirely by the recorded evidence of the witnesses or by additional facts ascertained by the Court itself or by the Investigating Officer, which are to be recorded in items 8 and 9 of the Findings.
3. The Court or Investigating Officer will therefore ensure that the necessary witnesses are called and that their evidence on all material points is ascertained and recorded.
4. The evidence of every witness is to be typewritten whenever possible. This will be done on ordinary foolscap sheets. Only one side of the sheet should be used. The pages of these sheets (after being signed as described below) must be consecutively numbered and securely fastened.
5. Each witness must sign each page of the evidence upon which his own evidence is recorded.
6. The questions put to witnesses should be as simple as possible, and the Court or Investigating Officer should ensure that the recorded evidence of each witness is free from ambiguity although it may not agree with the evidence of another.
7. THE HEADINGS OF THE FINDINGS HAVE BEEN FRAMED SO AS TO MEET THE CASE WHERE MORE THAN ONE AIRCRAFT IS INVOLVED IN THE ACCIDENT, AND CARE IS TO BE TAKEN TO SEE THAT THE FINDINGS CLEARLY INDICATE TO WHICH AIRCRAFT THEY REFER.

(B) That the Inquiry (Investigation) opened on (date) 10th June 1943 at (place) Canadian Forces Station, W.D.
 by order of A. D. S. G. M. A. C. with instructions to inquire into the circumstances
 connected with the Accident at 1000 S. H. S. (hours) on (date) 3rd June 1943
 at (place) place unknown

FOR THE PURPOSES OF (i) Establishing the facts called for in the Findings:

- (ii) Enabling the Court or Investigating Officer to state its opinion as to the circumstances and the cause of the accident and to make recommendations for the future.
- (iii) Inquire especially into

(C) THAT THE AIRCRAFT INVOLVED:

Type and Mark	AIRCRAFT	Type and Series	ENGINE		Status of Engine
			R.C.A.F. No.	Maker's No.	
Victory II	Unknown - <u>Marked</u>	<u>P. O. V</u>	<u>100-3771</u>	<u>2193</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
Victory II	<u>Marked</u>	<u>Marked</u>	<u>100-3772</u>	<u>2191</u>	<u>Unknown</u>

NOTE: Name of Pilot, Date, Altitude, & Duration of flight must be given in each column of this report.

Rank	Grade	Dist. of Pilot, Lt. Colonel, etc.	No. of Aircraft in which he was concerned	Remarks
P/O.	P/O.	P/O.	1	Witness crew
P/O.	P/O.	P/O.	1	Witness crew
P/O.	P/O.	P/O.	1	Witness crew
P/O.	P/O.	P/O.	1	Witness crew

WITNESSES: P.O. [Name]
 P.O. [Name]
 P.O. [Name]
 P.O. [Name]

(D) That the composition of the Court or Name of Investigating Officer is:

Rank	Name	Unit
P/O.	D. Mitchell	Southern Air Command Headquarters.

President: P/O. D. Mitchell

Members:

In Attendance:

(E) That the list of witnesses is:

Rank	Name	Grade of Civilian, (see 4)	Rank	Name	Grade of Civilian, (see 4)
P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.	1st Lt.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.
P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.	1st Lt.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.
P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.	P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.
P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.	P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.
P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.	P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.
P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.	P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.
P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.	P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.
P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.	P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.
P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.	P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.
P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.	P/O.	[Name]	P.O.S.S.

(F) That the flying experience of the Pilot(s) prior to this flight was:

Number of Pilots	Type	Total	(A) Night Flying included in previous column		Total Instrument Flying	(B) Total Logbook Time	Within the 6 months previous to date
			Days	Hours			
1	P.O.S.S.	66.75	2.75	1.15	2.05	-	150-30
1	Other	120-30	6.10	3.00	21.20	66.20	6.10
1	None	6.10	-	-	-	11.20	2-30
TOTAL		193-15	14.95	7.15	23.25	77.40	

(G) That the evidence obtained by the Court (Investigating Officer) is as set out in the evidence of the following (No.) witnesses on the following (No.) pages.

Witnesses: [List of names and page numbers]

(M) That the instructions contained in Para. A have been followed and we (I) make the following findings:

3. That the purposes of and instructions for the flight(s) were as follows:

AIRCRAFT No.	Who ordered the flight and for what purpose? Were any special instructions given, and if so, what were they? State if any company was instructing the other.
11 Vega Ventura AB 942	At the 11/14, 1942. Mission by Training Flight No special instructions were given.

4. That the aircraft was (were) controlled as follows:

AIRCRAFT Type	No. of Seats	Whether fitted with stable or dual control	NAMES OF OCCUPANTS OF SEATS		
			Front	Back	Other
Vega Ventura 11 AB 942	5	Single	P/O. Lansdale Sgt. Carter		Sgt. Brier Sgt. Stiles

5. That the aircraft took off as follows:

AIRCRAFT Type	No.	Time	Weather conditions when Aircraft took off and when it was available at the time of the accident.
Vega Ventura 11 AB 942		10:00 AM	During the afternoon from 6-10 tenths of heavy cumulo nimbus cloud based at an estimated 3000' with 1 to 3 tenths cumulo stratocumulus, tops of clouds at 1500'. Visibility was about 1 mile with cumulo nimbus precipitation. Visibility 1/2 mile. Total cloud miles North by northwest at 11:00 AM. Clouds above 11,000'. Wind at 3-5000' was 30-40-200 at 10-15 mph.

6. That the condition of aircraft at commencement of flight is as follows:

AIRCRAFT Type	No.	WHEN LAST EXAMINED			Whether Aircraft and Engine fit for Flight in Government
		By	Date	Where	
Vega Ventura 11 AB 942		By Rosen	2 June/43	WSP	Yes

7. That we (I) have* (have not) examined the following aircraft, engine and Pilot's Flying Log Books and Forms L. 14 and have ascertained:

Description of Book and Form	Number, including Material Form supplementing or confirming Evidence of Witness
Pilot's Flying Log	All in order. All Government Regulations complied with

8. That we (I) have been unable to obtain the evidence of the following material witnesses:

Name	Rank	Unit	Where present during occurrence of evidence	How contacted with witnesses

9. We (I have ~~not~~ visited the scene of the accident before (after) the aircraft was removed. I have found the following material facts. (If not, state why not.)

Location Unknown

10. That the Aircraft was loaded as follows:

Tare Weight 16,919 lbs

State Location of Occupants

Crew Stations on Take-off

Pilots, Crew and Passengers

800 lbs

State Quantity of Fuel in each Tank:

Front Tanks Full - 188.3 gals
 Empty " - 219.2 gals
 Aux. " - 61.1 gals
 Total 470.3 gals

Fuel Load

Full 3390 lbs

Oil Load

Full 225 lbs

Equipment, Bombs, Guns

1250 lbs

State what Equipment, Bombs, Guns, carried:

None
 None
 None
 w/2 Handguns
 Handgun Equipment
 Oxygen Equipment

Gross Weight

27,500 lbs

11. That the following paragraphs of C.A.P. 100 or Station Standing Orders were not complied with:

NIL

12. That the circumstances of the accident were, very briefly, as follows: Ventura 18948 took off at 1640 hrs. S.W.S., with Ventura 18935 to carry out local formation flying. Ventura 678 landed at 1800 hrs. after breaking formation at a point between 10 and 15 miles S.W. of Ventura. The aircraft was last seen flying over Santa

13. That the cause of the accident in our (my) opinion was as follows:

the cause of the accident is very obscure.

14. That the following are our (my) recommendations for the prevention of this type of accident:

*If there are no recommendations, say so.

NIL

Signature of President of Court
 (Or Investigating Officer)

Frank S. Williams '70

Signature of Member of Court

Signature and Remarks of Officer Commanding (If remarks are lengthy, attach separate sheet)

3-man and 2-man teams in formation on 18/12/42. The 3-man team was in formation on 18/12/42. The 2-man team was in formation on 18/12/42.

Approval and Remarks of Air Officer Commanding (If remarks are lengthy, attach separate sheet)

APPROVED

W. Williams
 (S. WILKINS)

Date of Report

21/12/42

(Signature)

Per Chief of the Air Staff.

LIST OF WITNESSES

- Page 3. Statement of First Witness, P/O. H.A. Groom, Operations Officer.
- Page 4. Statement of Second Witness, P/O. H.A. Groom, Operations Officer.
- Page 5. Statement of Third Witness, P/O. H.A. Groom, Operations Officer.
- Page 6. Statement of Fourth Witness, P/O. H.A. Groom, Operations Officer.
- Page 7. Statement of Fifth Witness, P/O. H.A. Groom, Operations Officer.
- Page 8. Statement of Sixth Witness, Mr. D.S. Black, Meteorologist.
- Page 9. Statement of Seventh Witness, LAC. White, R.M.A.
- Page 10. Statement of Eighth Witness, P/O. Steward, Medical Officer.
- Page 11. Statement of Ninth Witness, ACl. Lewis, P.M.A.
- Page 12. Statement of Tenth Witness, ACl. Airey, P.M.A.
- Page 13. Statement of Eleventh Witness, LAC. Huish, P.M.A.
- Page 14. Statement of Twelfth Witness, ACl. Baker, P.M.A.
- Page 15. Statement of Thirteenth Witness, P/O. Waller, Technical Adjutant.
- Page 16. Statement of Fourteenth Witness, P/O. Whittaker, Student Pilot.
- Page 17. Statement of Fifteenth Witness, P/O. H.A. White, Flying Instructor.
Member of the Investigating Officer.

LIST OF WITNESSES

- "1" - Photostatic copy of 1.14
- "2" - Photostatic copy of Aero-Engine Log Books
- "3" - Photostatic copy of Airframe Log Books
- "4" - Photostatic copy of Flight Authentication Book
- "5" - Map of airport used in witness report
- "6" - Statement of P/O. H.A. Groom, P.O. H.A. Groom, P.O. H.A. Groom - 1200 hrs.
1200 - 1200 hrs.
1200 - 1200 hrs.

Flight instructor, 2/10. S.A. Garrison, having been called, advised that I am flying Ventura 4422 (Ventura) equipped as Operations Officer, 2/10. S.A. Garrison, having been

Question 1. What evidence can you give in connection with the aircraft known as Ventura 4422 which disappeared approximately at 1830 hours G.M.T. June 3rd, 1943, from 34 O.S.U.

Answer 1. I was Navy Operations Officer on the afternoon of Thursday June 3rd, 1943. At 1930 hours I received a teletype call from S/Ldr. Fairbairn in the Control Tower stating that Ventura 4422 was then 50 minutes overdue on E.F.A. from a local flight. I immediately asked for V/T action to endeavour to contact this aircraft. At the same time I reported to Flying Control, Halifax that the aircraft was overdue and asked for overdue action to be initiated, informing the Superintendent of the Commanding Officer and Chief Instructor of my action. I ascertained from the Flight Commander that this aircraft took off at 1800 hours G.M.T. with Ventura 4422 in carry out local formation flying for a period of one-and-a-half hours. Ventura 4422 landed at 1800 hours G.M.T. after breaking formation at a point between 30 and 40 miles S.W. of the aerodrome. At 20.25 hours I enquired of the personnel at Hantscomb Bombing Range whether any aircraft had been seen by them flying out in the Bay, and was told that A.O. Wilson working there, had seen a Ventura flying at approximately 1000 feet about one mile out to sea in a S.W. direction from 34's as John. At 20.20 hours instructions were given that the N/T Anson was to be switched on. At 21.00 hours I telephoned Lt/Commander Kingston, U.S. Navy War Harbour and asked if he could co-operate in searching for the missing aircraft. He advised me that two aircraft were being sent out on a patrol the next Coast of Hants and the entrance to the Bay of Fundy immediately. At 21.20 hours I asked the R.A.A.F. Instructor, Millisville, St. John for assistance and my Squadron was sent off immediately to search for the missing aircraft in the Bay and the vicinity of the Hants coast. At 21.35 hours I was with crew and remain in V/T contact with base. At 21.30 hours I telephoned Flying Control, Halifax and advised them of these arrangements. I was told that Lt. J. S.A.S. Yarnish would carry out a search on the morning of the 4th June, and that information was sought from R.A.F. Station, Greenwood as to their part in the search. At 21.11 S/Ldr. Fairbairn and Deane's took off in Anson 6607 and 6612 to conduct a search of the area in which Ventura 4422 was last reported. At 23.25 hours I was informed that two Anson aircraft from R.A.F. Station, Greenwood had conducted a search, but that nothing had been seen. At 23.25 hours R.A.A.F. Millisville reported that their search had been fruitless.

At 08.30 hours Flying Squad was told, 1943. S.A. Garrison reported that V.T. Navy, War Harbour will send two Anson aircraft on a further search of the Bay. At 08.30 hours Flying Squad was told to search the Bay. At 08.30 hours Flying Squad was told to search the Bay. At 08.30 hours Flying Squad was told to search the Bay.

First Witness, (Cont).

At 01.35 hours Flying Control, Halifax were requested to lay on the following search areas: No. 1 N.A.G.S., Yarmouth 4430 N. to 4430 E. to 66 W. to 67 W. R.A.F. Station, Greenwood, base to 45 N. to 66 W. to Machias - Seal Island to 4430 N. 6530 W. to base. R.A.F. Station, Robert, Area East of 66 W. and 45 N. in the Bay of Fundy. At 08.43 hours Marine Craft 4113 reported entering search area. At 12.30 hours I arranged with Radio Stations C.H.S.J. St. John and C.J.L.S. Yarmouth to transmit a two hourly broadcast for any information on any aircraft seen or heard in distress at about 1800 hours O.M.T. June 3rd. At 14.15 hours I was advised that two civilian Air Patrol aircraft were carrying out a continuous search from Bar Harbour during the day. At 18.08 hours Anson 6051 took off on search, followed by Ansons 6607, 9819 and 7054. These aircraft landed at approximately 20.30 hours after a fruitless search. At 21.30 hours approaching bad weather prevented any further search from this Station.

Twenty four aircraft from various Stations took part in the search together with three surface craft.

A 7/10.

Second Officer, P/O. Webster, having been called, stated:

I am Flight Lieutenant J.S. Bowers (log) employed as flying instructor with the Flight (Operations) No. 34 O.S.V., RAAF Station, New Brunswick.

I produce Flight Authorization Book in which I authorized the flight of P/O. Langdale, Sgt. Carter, Bryer and Stiles, Serial No. 467 reads as follows: Date 3.6.43. Type: Ventura A942. Pilot: P/O. Langdale. Crew: Sergeant Carter, Sergeant Bryer, Sergeant Stiles. Duty Ordered: Formation local 500' Split leader. Time ordered to start: 1330 hours. Duration of flight: 1 hour 30 minutes. Initials of Flight Commanding Officer: J.S.B. Initials of Pilot that he understands the Order: S.M.L. Time of Take-off 1340. Action after flight: Missing.

The other aircraft and pilot in the formation was aircraft Ventura A858, Warrant Officer Harris, Pilot.

Question 2. What other instructions are given that do not appear on the Flight Authorization Book?

Answer 2. I gave these Pilot's instructions as to the type of formation I desired them to fly, and told them I expected them to use their wireless as much as possible using the formation frequency. I asked them if they knew the manual signals to be used in the event of difficulty of communication not being established. *They said they did - per*

Question 3. How much formation flying did P/O. Langdale have on Venturas.

Answer 3. Referring to his log Book I see that P/O. Langdale had 1 hour in dual formation and 5 hours solo formation on Ventura aircraft at this Station.

...S.M.L.

107

Chief Witness, W/O. Harris, having been called,
 withdrew.

I am Herbert Officer E Harris, R.N. (253137)
 employed as student pilot at No. 34 O.T.S.
 Pennfield Ridge, New Brunswick.

Question 4. Did you take off in formation with
 P/O. Langdale at 1100 hours O.M.T.
 in Ventura A650 on 3rd June, 1943
 from No. 34 O.T.S. Pennfield Ridge?

Answer 4. Yes, I took off first and he then followed
 me off. We pulled into formation about
 five minutes after take off. We climbed up
 in formation on a heading of 045 until we
 reached the cloud base which was approximately
 2500'. We flew under the cloud base for
 approximately 15 minutes. During this time
 we did several turns keeping within the local
 flying area to the N.W. of the aerodrome.
 The clouds were about five-hundred in that
 area and as it was very heavy I decided to
 climb above them. We levelled out at 6000'.
 I then led the formation down to the coast.
 As we approached the coast the clouds below
 us thickened. I then made a turn to the right
 and followed the coast line back to the airport.
 Seeing a very large clear spot in the area
 bounded by the airport, Lake Utopia, Bains
 Aerodrome, and I led the formation into it and then
 gave P/O. Langdale lead of the formation. He
 then turned to the right and flew on a heading
 of approximately 045 passing North of the
 airport which was plenty visible to me and my
 Navigator. We flew on for several minutes
 and he did a turn to his right and flew on to
 approximately 135° and continued on his course.
 The stream tops of the clouds were building up
 and we were flying through very light clouds.
 We finally broke through top of these clouds and
 a very high cloud layer appeared ahead of us. We
 immediately went into a climb without giving a
 signal, consequently I dropped about two lengths
 behind him. In ascending a cloud I lost sight of
 him, so I immediately turned my face left to the
 right, turning 180° bringing me into view of this
 cloud. About a minute later I saw his engine from
 the clouds to the S.W. of us. He then turned
 towards me, I continued on my course. Our height
 at this time was approximately 6400'. We were still
 flying through light broken cloud and he passed
 under me, and then turned to his left and passed
 very close underneath me. I then began a turn to
 my left to rejoin the formation. At this time my
 Wireless Operator called up and wanted to break
 the formation. I heard the conversation between
 the two W/O's. and instructed my Wireless Operator
 that we were breaking formation. We were not under
 1/2 from Pilot to Pilot as it was individual.
 The last I saw of the other aircraft it was heading
 in a S.W. direction. I immediately turned to my
 right towards our aircraft on a course of about 300°
 and descended down to 5000' below the clouds and
 got clear shortly afterwards. It took an approximate
 15 minutes to reach the airport and land.

Third witness, continue.

Question 5. Did you see P/O. Langdale, Sergeant Carter, Sergeant Erier and Sergeant Stiles enter Ventura ABQ42 just before its take-off on June 3rd?

Answer 5. Yes.

Question 6. Did you see any of the aforementioned crew leave the aircraft before take-off?

Answer 6. No, I didn't.

Question 7. Can you give any opinion as to what may have caused the disappearance of this aircraft?

Answer 7. I would say that it is possible that he had reversed his compass.

Question 8. Were there any possibilities of icing?

Answer 8. We did not strike any icing conditions.

Question 9. Can you give us any idea as to P/O. Langdale's flying ability.

Answer 9. Only his formation flying which appeared quite good to me. This was the only time I had flown formation with him.

.....P/O. Langdale.....P/O.

Fourth witness, Mr. S.G. Black, having been called, stated

I am Donald S. Black, employed as Meteorologist at No. 14 C.S.V. Pennfield Ridge, New Brunswick.

Question 10. Will you state the weather conditions at the time of take-off and the period following when Ventura Alpha2 left Pennfield Ridge on formation flight at 1640 night hours 0.M.T. on June 3rd, 1947?

Answer 10.

I might explain that these reports are based on the hourly weather reports from Yarmouth, Pennfield Ridge and also on a weather test in which I myself took part from 1440 0.M.T. to 1500 0.M.T.

At 1630 0.M.T. a moderate rain shower had just ceased at Pennfield Ridge aerodrome. The shower was moving south westward.

During the afternoon over a route and at the aerodrome there was from six to ten tenths of heavy cumulus cloud based at an estimated 3500' with one to three-tenths of ragged cloud or seed based at 2500'. The tops of the cloud at 1500 0.M.T. were at 4000' with cumulus tops protruding through the cloud deck to an estimated height of 1700'. However, the cumulus tops flattened out and a vertical thickness of the cloud decreased during the afternoon. There were a few scattered light rain showers aloft and a few which reached the ground. As the cloud extended over the Bay of Fundy a cloud base rose gradually to 4-5000'. The visibility was 15 miles or better, except when reduced to 6 to 10 miles in the showers and along the Nova Scotia coast over the Bay of Fundy. The turbulence was light beneath the cloud and moderate in the cloud. In the heavier cumulus clouds the turbulence would be severe, being intense up to 1500 to 2000 feet above 11,000'. The tops of clouds would be approximately 20,000 feet as

D73

20-25 miles per hour.

S. S. Black

FRANK WILSON, JR., WHITE, having been called, stated:

I am for LESLIE HALL WHITE, R.A., employed as an
P.M. in the flight at No. 34 C.F.O. Pensfield Road,
New Brunswick.

Question 11. What had you to do with Ventura 45742
immediately prior to the take-off on
3rd June, 1943.

Answer 11. I filled the aircraft up with petrol
and oil.

..... I will answer.....

ATM

Sixth Witness, P/O. G.V. Steward, having been called,
states:

I am Flight Lieutenant Graham Villiers Steward,
(61560) employed as Medical Officer at No. 34 O.F.U.
Royal Air Force, Pansfield Bldg., New Brumard ok.

Question 12. Do you know anything of the physical
condition of P/O. Langdale prior to
June 3rd, 1943.

Answer 12. I have examined P/O. Langdale's Medical
Documents and find that his Category is
A1B, and that there is no evidence of
previous serious illnesses or disabilities.

.....*Subscribed*.....*Wick*

1943

Servanth Witness, AGI. Lewis, having been called,
witness:

I am Mr. MURPHY AGI. Lewis, B. employed as a
P.M.A. in "B" Flight at No. 14 O.S.H. Royal Air
Force Station, Pennfield Ridge, New Brunswick.

Question 13. Was you also the L.14 on Ventura
ANN48 on 2nd June, 1943?

Answer 13. Yes.

Question 14. What had you to do with Ventura
ANN48?

Answer 14. I made a check on the undercarriage,
the wheels, fuselage, cockpit and
controls and found them all fully
serviceable. I checked the hydraulic
tank and found it full. I checked
the mainplane and slots and both were
serviceable. I checked the complete
tail unit and found it serviceable.
I checked the tail also and found
it serviceable.

.....

ANN

Flight Witness, A01 Army, having DO 17 722.
called stated:

I am No. 1042249 A01 Army, J.P. received
as a F.R.N. in 3rd flight at No. 34 C.F.U.
Royal Air Force Station, Pennfield Ridge, New
Brunswick.

Question 15. What had you to do with Ventura
A3942 immediately prior to
3rd June, 1943.

Answer 15. On 2nd June, 1943 I did daily
inspection on the port engine.
This was perfectly serviceable.

Signature

J.P. Army.....

12

Ninth Witness, Mr. Knick, having been duly sworn stated:

I am No. 1402741 LAC. Knick, F.R., employed as a P.M.E. in "B" Flight at No. 34 D.T.U. Royal Air Force Station, Pennington Ridge, New Brunswick.

Question 16. What had you to do with Ventura AN942 immediately prior to 3rd June, 1943?

Answer 16. I did the daily inspection on the starboard engine on 2nd June, 1943. This was perfectly serviceable.

.....
[Signature].....

10m

YOUTH WITNESS, ASI. Reber, having been called
by stated

I am No. 140042 ASI. Reber, I. employed as
a P.M.E. in 73rd Flight at No. 34 O.F.U. Royal
Air Force Station, Pennfield Ridge, New Brunswick.

Question 17. Was the MA in connection with
Ventura A842 initialed by P/O.
Langdale?

Answer 17. Yes, it was, on 3rd June, 1943.

.....
H. Reber
.....

140042

Alonzo H. Hines, S/O. F.S. Weller, having been called, duly sworn stated:

I am Flying Officer F.S. Weller (44301) employed as Technical Adjutant at No. 34 O.F.U., Royal Air Force Station, Funnifield Ridge, New Brunswick.

I hereby produce h.14 as Exhibit 'A' introduced by S/Ldr. O.F. Hyams at 1500 hours on 3rd June, 1943, photostatic copies of which are placed in evidence.

I also produce the Flying Log Book of the Pilot.

I further produce Airframe and Engine Log Books of Ventura AB42, copies of which are placed in evidence as Exhibits 'B' and 'C'.

I examined all Log Books immediately after impounding and found them correct and upto date.

F.S. Weller
S/O.3/0.

Am.

Swish Wilson, P/O. Muller, having been called, only stated:

I am Pilot Officer H.O. Findlater (X2016969) a pupil pilot on No. 12 Course at No. 34 O.T.U. Royal Air Force Station, Pennfield Ridge, New Brunswick.

Question 18. Did you fly Ventura A3942 immediately prior to its last formation flight by P/O. Longdale on 3rd June, 1943?

Answer 18. Yes.

Question 19. Did you have any trouble with the aircraft?

Answer 19. It was a perfectly good aeroplane to fly.

Question 20. Did you know P/O Longdale very well, and if so what can you tell me about his flying ability?

Answer 20. I know him very well personally, but I have not flown with him. I don't know much about his flying ability, but he was of a very steady character and a very reliable and careful type.

Question 21. Would you care to state what was the possible cause of the disappearance of this aircraft?

Answer 21. I have no idea of the cause of the disappearance of the aircraft, but it was in perfect flying condition when I last flew it.

H. Findlater
P/O

P/O

thirteenth witness, P/O. R.S. White, having been called, only states:

I am Flying Officer R.S. White (J15076) employed as a Flying Instructor at No. 3 F.S.U., Royal Air Force Station, Wunstow, New Brunswick.

Question 22. What can you tell me of the flying ability of P/O. Langdale?

Answer 22. I was the Flying Instructor of P/O. Langdale. He was a safe, steady pilot with no outstanding faults that I could see.

Question 23. What would ^{you} say concerning his instrument flying?

Answer 23. His instrument flying was better than average.

Question 24. What in your opinion would be the cause of the disappearance of Ventura A89421

Answer 24. It is very obscure, and I don't believe I could give an opinion.

Question 25. Were there any Flying Regulations broken as far as you know?

Answer 25. As far as I know there were no Flying Regulations broken at all.

R.S. White P/O.

REPORT OF THE INVESTIGATING OFFICER

The Investigating Officer finds that Ventura A3342 took off at 1600 hours G.M.T. with Ventura A3342 from R.A.F. Station, Pansfield Ridge, New Brunswick in hurry out in local formation flying. Ventura A3342 landed at 1800 hours G.M.T. after breaking formation at a point between 30 and 40 miles South East of the aerodrome at Pansfield Ridge. Ventura A3342 was last seen flying due South and did not return and is presumed lost.

- That - Pilot Officer S.M. Inghale (NZ424554)
Sergeant Carter, F.R. (NZ416456)
Sergeant Brier, A.F. (NZ484967)
Sergeant Stiles, F.J. (K164116)

were occupants of Ventura A3342, and were on active service on Air Force duty.

That - the said occupants are missing and must be presumed dead.

Frank Britton
Investigating Officer. P/O.

Appendix A

FLIGHT EQUIPMENT CARRIED ON VENTURA AE.942 (MISSING)

Serial No.	Description	Quantity	Serial No.
632	Bags Carrying	One	
7	Boxes Maps	One	
131	Switches Type B.	One	
278	Switches Type R.	Two	
485	Boxes Type B.	One	
10	Plugs 5 way.	Seven	
20	Switches Firing	One	
553	Lamps Filament	Four	
220	Compass Astro	One	2507
9	Dividers	One	
110	Sight Tail Drift	One	
150	Wrist watch Navigation	One	7331
214	Computer Dalton	One	
31	Masks Oxygen	One	6424
655(RAF)	Pistol Signal No. 3.	One	
534	Studs Cooking Mx 11	Two	
1663(RAF)	Guns Browning .303	Four	3019, 3044, 3080, 2738.
NIV	Guns Browning .50	Two	171073, 295518
792(RAF)	Sights Reflector 24V	One	
628	Solenoids LH	Two	
629	Units Rear gear release	Two	
373	Brackets Admuth	One	1775/41
9	Attachments LTV	One	
9	Headbands	Four	
10A	Microphones Type 21	Two	
11994(RAF)	Microphones Type 26	Two	
12971(RAF)	Receivers Telephone Head	Eight	
12401(RAF)	Tuning Meter Bendix WF11C	One	
NIV 1(RAF)	Attachments No. 2	Seven	
109	Attachments No. 3	Seven	
117	Parachute 8QR	One	SW10885
88	Parachute 8CCE	Three	SW12482, SW12603, 1R 1711.
84	Kits Emergency Ration	Three	
24	Tanks Water	One	
NIV 2	Bags Sleeping	Four	
22	Jackets Life Saving	Four	
58	Turrets Bobbin & Paul Type C.	One	1087/6

Verified that the above list contains all items of Flight Inventory Equipment carried by Ventura Aircraft AE.942 on commencement of flight on 3rd, June 1943 and that only items listed herein are being submitted for write-off in respect of this aircraft.

P. M. H. F. H.
[Signature]
 Participating Officer.