

BOMBER HITS WORLD'S BIGGEST SKY SCRAPER.
First pictures.

The top of the Empire State Building was shrouded in mist when a Mitchell bomber crashed into the 78th story. *Thousands*
~~were at work at the time.~~
~~The thousands of workers in the great skyscraper were at their desks.~~ The B.25 was blinded by fog, the pilot unaware that he was well off his course. New Yorkers could hear that the bomber was flying low but could not see it. Then came the terrific explosion.

Flaming petrol poured down several floors. Thirteen people were killed, twenty-six injured. In quick time a strong fire fighting force was on the scene *and* The flames were soon under control. For a *while* New York had the illusion of being in the front line. The offices suffering worst damage belonged to the Catholic Welfare Conference, devoted to War relief. Considering the many hundreds of people at work in the building, it is surprising that so few were killed. It says much for the strength and fire resisting power of the steel and concrete structure that the hundred and two storey sky scraper was so little damaged.

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July 31, 1945

1. TITLE: SKYSCRAPER TRAGEDY!

2. Manhattan—scene of one of the strangest tragedies of the war. Tragedy at the world's greatest skyscraper, the Empire State building. The story began on a humid Saturday morning. Workers at the Empire State were at their desks, and miles away a B-25 took off from Bedford, Massachusetts. The pilot, flying over LaGuardia Field, was advised to land because of the fog. But he headed for Newark Airport instead, along what he thought was this route, over the Hudson River. But actually he was far to the East, headed for disaster. The city was cloaked in almost impenetrable fog.

14½. The plane crashed with terrifying impact into the 78th and 79th floors of the building, smashing through seven walls. Torrents of flaming gasoline poured through the floors as the tanks exploded. The bomber struck with the force of 35 eight-inch shells fired at point blank range. Firemen quickly extinguished the blaze. Some of these scenes were filmed by Coast Guard cameramen. Thirteen persons met death instantly, most of them employees of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, who had been working on tasks of war relief when the crash came. The body of one employee was found on a ledge 7 stories down. Twenty-six were injured in this catastrophe—a catastrophe that recalled scenes of war disaster in the bombed cities of Europe. Officials referred to the smallness of the death list as a "miracle". One of the propellers was found imbedded in a wall of the building, and an elevator plunged down 80 floors, cables and debris tumbling over it. One of the plane's motors crashed 1,000 feet below. The other motor flew clear across the building, falling on the penthouse of a 12-story structure on the next street. And though other parts of the wrecked bomber fell to ordinarily traffic-jammed 34th street below, miraculously, no one was injured. There were many courageous and heroic persons on the scene—one of them was 17-year old Don Molony, a Coastguardsman who was an eyewitness to the explosion and who lost no time in rushing to give help.

Two times the heroic boy ran up 79 flights of stairs to give aid.

Two days later, the 102-story Empire State Building had reopened. Scaffolding had been rigged below the stricken floors, and the damage, estimated at half a million dollars, was being repaired. An Army board of investigation had set to work. The people of New York, pondering one of the most fantastic disasters of all time, looked to a post-war air age free of tragedy from the skies.