

FOR IMMEDIATE USE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
BUREAU OF AIR COMMERCE  
Washington

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE  
CONCERNING AN AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT  
WHICH OCCURRED TO A PRIVATELY OWNED PLANE  
ON APRIL 22, 1935, AT PORTLAND, INDIANA

To the Secretary of Commerce

On April 22, 1935 at about 2 38 p.m. at Brigham Airport, Portland, Indiana, a privately owned airplane spun to the ground with resultant death to the pilot and one passenger and the complete destruction of the aircraft.

The plane, a Welch, model OW-6M, owned by Fred Bimel of Portland, Indiana, was not a licensed aircraft but bore Department of Commerce identification No. 13521. The pilot, Glen Berger, did not hold any class of pilot's license issued by the Department of Commerce. The passenger, Orlo Bishop, was from Portland, Indiana.

According to statements of witnesses, the pilot had made about two-thirds of a turn necessary to get the plane in a direction for landing on the airport when he throttled his engine to complete his landing approach in a glide. At this time the nose of the plane was seen to drop and the plane continued into the ground from an altitude of about 250 feet in what appeared to be a spiral. The plane was equipped with dual controls which had not been removed. It is possible that the passenger interfered with the controls during the glide for a landing but it is not thought probable.

It is the opinion of the Accident Board that the probable cause of this accident was the pilot's failure to properly handle the aircraft.

Respectfully submitted,

Eugene L. Vidal  
Director of Air Commerce