

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF AIR COMMERCE
WASHINGTON

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE CONCERNING AN AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT
WHICH OCCURRED TO A PRIVATELY OWNED PLANE
ON JUNE 22, 1955 AT GARDEN CITY, L. I., New York

To the Secretary of Commerce

On June 22, 1955 at about 8:00 p.m. at Garden City, Long Island, New York, a privately owned airplane failed in flight with resultant death to the pilot and one passenger and the complete destruction of the aircraft.

The plane, a Mercury Chic, model T-2, bore Department of Commerce license number NC-15N and was owned by the pilot and Frank Buckowy of Garden City. The pilot, Albert L. Whitney, held a Department of Commerce private pilot's license. The passenger, Floyd C. Brink of New York City also held a Department of Commerce private pilot's license.

The plane, piloted by Whitney, took off from Roosevelt Field, Long Island, for a pleasure flight over that vicinity. Shortly after this the plane, flying at about 1500 feet, was seen to go into a glide with the engine throttled for a couple of hundred feet. As it levelled out, both wings were seen to fold back against the fuselage. The plane then went into a vertical dive over which the pilot had no control. Witnesses state that the plane had not engaged in any acrobatics and that the glide which preceded the folding back of the wings was not excessive.

An examination of the wreckage failed to indicate that the wing structure of either wing had failed in the air. However, a supporting strut from the fuselage to the left wing was found at a point about a city block from where the plane struck. The bolt connecting this strut with the wing spar was broken.

It is the opinion of the Accident Board that the probable cause of this accident was structural failure of the wing supporting system in flight.

Respectfully submitted,

Eugene L. Vidal,
Director of Air Commerce.