

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
BUREAU OF AIR COMMERCE  
Washington

REPORT OF THE ACCIDENT BOARD  
BUREAU OF AIR COMMERCE

Statement of probable cause concerning an accident which  
occurred to a privately owned airplane near Johnstown,  
New York, on September 20, 1935

To the Director of Air Commerce

On September 20, 1935 at approximately 3.20 p.m. on a pasture field about 3 miles north of Johnstown, New York, a privately owned airplane crashed with resultant death to the student pilot and passenger and the complete destruction of the aircraft.

The airplane, a Taylor Cub, model E-2, was owned by A. W. Vaughn, Johnstown, New York, and bore Department of Commerce license number NC-13117. The pilot, Sylvester France, held a Department of Commerce student pilot's license. The passenger was Everett Pulver.

The take-off was accomplished from Johnstown Airport at about 3 00 p.m. Shortly thereafter, the airplane was observed flying low over the countryside doing steep banks and turns. It was last seen disappearing over the brow of a hill and a few seconds later the sound of the crash was heard.

From the position in which the airplane was found, it is evident that it either stalled or flew directly into the ground. There was no evidence of a spin. Investigation disclosed that all controls were connected and safetied and there was no indication of structural failure. The dual controls used in student instruction had not been removed from the passenger's compartment.

It is the opinion of the Accident Board that the probable cause of this accident was failure of the pilot to maintain control of the aircraft while flying at a very low altitude.

Corrective measures for accidents of this nature exist in the Air Commerce Regulations. The Accident Board wishes to call attention to the regulations violated in this flight and which invited just such an accident.

1. A student pilot was carrying a passenger.
2. The dual controls in the passenger's cockpit were not disconnected.
3. The entire flight was made below the minimum prescribed altitude of 500 feet.
4. Acrobatic maneuvers were performed below the prescribed altitudes of 1500 feet and without parachutes.

Respectfully submitted,

ACCIDENT BOARD.

Jesse W. Lankford, Secretary

Joe T. Shumate, Jr.

Richard C. Gazley, Chief Engineer,  
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vice