

July 10, 1936

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF AIR COMMERCE
Washington

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE CONCERNING AN AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT
WHICH OCCURRED TO A COMMERCIALY OWNED AIRPLANE NEAR ATLANTA,
GEORGIA, ON APRIL 24, 1936

To the Secretary of Commerce:

On April 24, 1936, at approximately 5:15 p.m., near Candler Field, Atlanta, Georgia, an airplane, while being flown in acrobatic maneuvers, crashed with resultant death to the pilot and the complete destruction of the aircraft.

The airplane, a Fleet Model 2, bore Federal license No. NC-645M, and was owned by Air Service, Inc., Candler Field, Atlanta, Georgia. The pilot, Eugene O. Batson, held a Federal student pilot's license.

According to statements of witnesses, the student pilot made this flight for the purpose of practicing spin maneuvers. He made a conservative take-off and climbed to an altitude of about 3,000 feet. He then made a number of spins, recovering from them in a normal manner. However, it was noticed that he pulled the nose of the airplane higher at the start of each successive spin and that after the first two or three spins he neglected to gain back the altitude he had lost before starting another. On the fourth or fifth spin he was seen to pull the nose of the aircraft straight up into a vertical position and allow it to stall. The airplane then fell into an inverted spin from which the pilot did not regain control. The pilot jumped at an altitude of about 200 feet, but was so near the ground that his parachute did not have sufficient time to open completely.

Examination of the wreckage failed to disclose any evidence of structural failure of the aircraft. The parachute being partially opened at the time of impact is evidence that it was functioning normally and that it would have opened completely had it been used from a greater altitude.

It is the opinion of the Bureau of Air Commerce that the probable cause of this accident was loss of control of the aircraft while performing acrobatic maneuvers, due to the inexperience of the pilot.

Respectfully submitted,

Eugene L. Vidal
Director of Air Commerce