

REPORT OF THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
on the
Investigation of an Accident Involving Aircraft During a
Cross-Country Pleasure Flight

Lowell Newton Clyne and his passenger, Fred Sloan, were fatally injured in an accident which occurred near Kinsey, Missouri, at approximately 7:20 a.m. on May 9, 1943. Clyne held a private pilot certificate with a Class 2S land rating and had flown about 195 solo hours, of which approximately 3 were in the type of aircraft involved. In the three months preceding the accident he had flown only 6 hours. Sloan was not certificated as an airman. The aircraft, a Culver LCA, NC 41704, owned by Nelson E. Weber, was demolished.

Clyne received proper clearance and, accompanied by Sloan, took off from Mt. Vernon, Illinois at about 6:45 a.m. on a cross-country flight to Springfield, Missouri. He neither requested nor received weather information prior to his departure. At approximately 7:20 a.m. three witnesses, residing about 4 3/4 miles northwest of Kinsey, observed the plane flying at an altitude of about 25 feet over houses and tree tops. These witnesses stated that almost immediately thereafter the plane dived to the ground, crashing on a wooded hillside nearby. According to unofficial reports weather conditions at the time were: Ceiling 200 feet, visibility 3/8 mile, light rain and fog, wind NW 7 m.p.h.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no indication of failure of any part of the aircraft prior to impact. The manner in which the propeller was broken indicated that considerable power was being developed when the plane struck the hillside. Dual controls were installed and operative. The aircraft was not equipped for instrument flying and carried no radio equipment. Terrain in the vicinity of the accident rises very abruptly and is about 200 feet higher than Mt. Vernon, the point of take-off.

Had the pilot requested weather information for his intended route, which was over rugged, mountainous terrain, he would have learned that the weather would not permit contact flight. St. Louis, Missouri, north of his course, was overcast, ceiling 200 feet, visibility 3/8 mile, foggy; while Springfield, his destination 228 miles distant, was overcast, ceiling 500 feet, visibility 5 miles, rain and fog, wind SE 27 m.p.h.

The primary cause of this accident was Clyne's poor judgment in attempting a cross-country contact flight without first ascertaining the weather along his intended route, and in continuing the flight when he encountered weather conditions far below the minimum for contact flight.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Tombs
Secretary