

Adopted January 10, 1944

File No. 2713-43

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

Archie Roosevelt Clemens and Artemus Ward Cox, Jr., were fatally injured in an accident which occurred approximately 1 mile west of Dunbar, West Virginia, at about 4:20 p.m. on June 26, 1943. Clemens held a commercial pilot certificate with single-engine land and sea, 0-340 h.p. ratings. He had accumulated approximately 1104 solo hours, about 7 of which were in the type of aircraft involved. Cox held a private pilot certificate with single-engine land and sea, 0-325 h.p. ratings and had flown approximately 200 solo hours. The aircraft, a Culver LFA, NC 41622, owned by Glenn T. Clark, was demolished.

Clemens, accompanied by Cox, took off from Wertz Field, Charleston, West Virginia, at approximately 4:15 p.m. on a local pleasure flight. About five minutes later, the aircraft was observed some 5 miles east of the airport, headed up the approximate center of a valley in a north-easterly direction at an estimated altitude of 300 feet. At this point a left turn was started toward a mountain, the bank of the plane becoming progressively steeper to clear the rapidly rising slope of the mountain-side. After approximately 160° of the turn had been accomplished, with very little altitude and flying speed left, the pilot was forced to pull up to avoid an electric power line directly in front of him. The plane was stalled during the pull-up and crashed on the nose and leading edge of the right wing.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no evidence of failure of any part of the aircraft prior to the accident, and the manner in which the propeller was broken indicated that power was being developed at the time of impact. Dual controls were installed and operative. Weather conditions were favorable with ceiling and visibility unlimited and a west wind of about 8 m.p.h.

The radius of turn of the Culver is greater than that of the type aircraft Clemens was accustomed to flying and it is possible that he underestimated the radius required to complete his turn.

The probable cause of this accident was poor judgment on the part of the pilot.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred W. Toombs
Secretary