

Accident February 2, 1944

File No. 3397-43

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

Ray Clifton Mallett was fatally injured and his student, Kenneth Warren Tucker, received minor injuries in an accident which occurred approximately $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles northwest of Robert H. Hinckley Airport, Ogden, Utah, about 10:15 a.m. on July 29, 1943. Mallett held a commercial pilot certificate with single-engine land, 0-80 h.p., and flight instructor ratings. He had flown approximately 657 solo hours and had spent about 438 hours giving dual instruction. Tucker, a War Training Service Navy trainee, had accumulated approximately 38 dual and 30 solo hours. The aircraft, a Piper J3L-65, NC 33247, owned by the Defense Plant Corporation and being operated by Utah Pacific Airways, Inc., in the War Training Service program, was extensively damaged.

Mallett and Tucker took off from the Robert H. Hinckley Airport at approximately 8:40 a.m. on a routine instruction flight. After practicing various maneuvers, the student simulated two forced landings which were unsatisfactorily executed, following which the instructor demonstrated a simulated forced landing: At an altitude of from 600 to 700 feet the student throttled the engine, applied carburetor heat and called for a forced landing. The instructor selected a small field and during the gliding straight-in approach he called the student's attention to the fact that they were too high and demonstrated in two sideslips how to lose altitude. During the subsequent straight-in approach, the landing gear shock struts struck a power line 22 feet above the ground, severing the wires, and the plane dived to the ground on its nose, landing gear and left wing tip, turned over, and came to rest in an inverted position.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no failure of any part of the aircraft prior to the accident and the manner in which the propeller was broken indicated that considerable power was being developed at the time of impact with the ground. The field selected by the instructor for the simulated forced landing was small for the purpose but there were no more suitable fields in the vicinity. The wires were barely visible against a background of trees and the supporting poles were obscured.

If the instructor had exercised sound judgment he would have discontinued the simulated forced landing at a safe altitude. The student recalled flying low over a house and trees and realized that they had struck something while in a normal glide. He stated that when they struck the wires power had not been applied for the pull-up. However, he remembered nothing thereafter. It is apparent that neither the student nor the instructor saw the power line prior to striking it and that power was applied following impact with the wires in an attempt to regain control.

The probable cause of this accident was the instructor's failure to observe and avoid a power line while carrying a simulated forced landing to a dangerously low altitude.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Frederic A. Tombs
Secretary