

Adopted March 11, 1944

File No. 3260-43

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

Charles Baird Freeborn and his passenger, Ivan Lucas, were seriously injured in an accident which occurred near Bowman Field, Louisville, Kentucky, about 1:45 p.m. on August 8, 1943. Freeborn held a private pilot certificate with a single-engine land, 0-80 h.p. rating. He had flown approximately 250 hours, about 12 of which were in the type airplane involved. Lucas, a non-revenue passenger, was not certificated as an airman. The aircraft, a Piper J-3, NC 20862, powered by a Continental 40 h.p. engine and owned by Paul Jones, was demolished.

Freeborn and Lucas took off from Bowman Field at approximately 1:45 p.m. on a local pleasure flight. The take-off was made from a 4500-foot runway into a variable south wind of approximately 4 m.p.h. The plane was stalled off the ground before sufficient flying speed had been attained and was flown in a nose-high attitude at near stalling speed until an altitude of about 50 feet was reached some 500 feet beyond the end of the runway. During an attempted right turn, apparently to avoid trees ahead, the nearly stalled condition became complete and the plane fell off into a right spin. After completing about 90° of a right turn it struck the ground on the nose and right wing in an almost vertical position, bounced forward about 18 feet and came to rest on its collapsed landing gear.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no evidence of failure of any part of the aircraft prior to impact. The weather was suitable for flying and did not contribute to the accident. Freeborn was reported to have had a tendency to climb low-powered aircraft too steeply and had been cautioned several times to not climb so steeply on take-offs. Qualified witnesses agreed that the pilot did not permit the plane to attain a safe flying speed and that it was flown in a nearly stalled attitude up to the point of the right turn.

This accident was due to poor judgment and flying technique on the part of the pilot.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs
Secretary