

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

An accident which occurred approximately  $2\frac{1}{4}$  miles west of the Municipal Airport, Crete, Nebraska, about 4:30 p.m. on October 7, 1943, resulted in fatal injuries to Pilot Norma Ruth Adams and her passenger, Frank Eugene Spinar. Miss Adams, age 19, held a commercial pilot certificate with a single-engine land, 0-80 h.p. rating and had flown approximately 300 solo hours, around 37 of which were in the type of aircraft involved. Spinar, age 18, was employed as a student mechanic at the Crete Airport and, although uncertificated, had received some dual flight experience. The aircraft, a Piper J5A, NC 38590, owned by A. L. Johnson, Jr. and M. D. Osterhout, Jr., was demolished.

Miss Adams secured clearance for a local pleasure flight and, accompanied by Spinar, took off from the Crete Municipal Airport about 4:00 p.m. When they had failed to return by 6:00 p.m. an aerial search was made until dark. Ground searchers continued looking for the aircraft throughout the night but it was not located until about 9:00 a.m. the following day when members of the Civil Air Patrol sighted the wreckage from the air. The plane had struck the ground nose-first at an angle of approximately  $45^{\circ}$  in a cornfield about  $2\frac{1}{4}$  miles west of the airport. There were no known witnesses to the accident.

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 considerable power was being developed at the time of impact. The weather was suitable for contact flight. Dual controls were installed and operative. It was not possible to determine who was flying the plane at the time of the accident.

Between 4:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. a farmer nearby observed a plane answering this one's description executing simulated forced landings to corn-top height, followed each time by steep climbing turns. He said that he did not observe the aircraft further as these maneuvers were a common occurrence in this neighborhood, nearby the airport.

The probable cause of this accident was not determined.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs  
Secretary