

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

An accident which occurred about 4 miles west of Mansfield, Texas, at approximately 8 45 a.m. on October 30, 1943, resulted in critical injuries to Pilot David Craig Crenshaw and fatal injury to his passenger, Paul George. (Crenshaw succumbed to his injuries on December 14, 1943.) Crenshaw, age 17, held a student pilot certificate and had flown about 56 solo hours, all in the type aircraft involved. George, age 16, was not certificated as an airman. The aircraft, a Piper J3L-65, NC 38560, owned by Roy R. Taylor, was demolished.

Crenshaw, accompanied by George, took off from the Midwest Airport, Mansfield, Texas, about 7 35 a.m. on a local pleasure flight. Some time later they overtook Pilot Clyde Huddleston, age 16, who was flying from the same airport. According to Huddleston, Crenshaw flew alongside him, following which both pilots started hedgehopping and diving at objects on the ground. After diving at a barn Crenshaw made a turn to avoid a tree in his flight path, during which he lost altitude and the aircraft, under full power, struck the ground on the right wing tip and right side of the landing gear.

There was no indication of failure of any part of the aircraft prior to the accident and the manner in which the propeller was broken substantiated the opinion of witnesses that the aircraft contacted the ground under full power.

Crenshaw and George were part-time employees at Midwest Airport, where Crenshaw had received his flight instruction and was permitted to fly on hours off duty. The subject flight was neither properly cleared nor was it under the supervision of an instructor. At the time of take-off no one was present at the airport except the night guard and since both Crenshaw and George were well known to him he made no attempt to interfere with them. Dual controls were installed and operative but Crenshaw stated that George did not handle the controls at any time during the flight.

It is quite apparent that this accident was the result of Pilot Crenshaw's recklessness and dangerous flight conduct without regard for the safety of life or property.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs
Secretary