

Adopted: May 5, 1944

File No. 4744-43

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

An accident which occurred approximately 5 miles south of San Angelo, Texas, between 7:50 p.m. and 7:55 p.m. CWT on November 6, 1943, resulted in serious injuries to Pilot Leon Woodis Halsted and minor injuries to his 2½ year old daughter, Lynda Diane. Halsted, age 32, held a private pilot certificate with a single-engine land, 0-80 h.p. rating and had accumulated approximately 102 solo hours, 56 of which were in the type airplane involved. The aircraft, a Luscombe 8D, NC 41942, owned by the pilot, was extensively damaged.

Pilot Halsted, with his infant daughter, took off from Ector County Airport, Odessa, Texas, about 5:15 p.m. MWT (6:15 p.m. CWT) on a cross-country pleasure flight to North Concho Airport, San Angelo, Texas, 120 airline miles distant. When he arrived in the vicinity of San Angelo, approximately 30 minutes later, he was unable to locate the North Concho Airport and on account of rapidly approaching darkness attempted a precautionary landing on a newly paved highway. During the landing approach, while only a few feet above the ground, he observed a barricade across the road. In an effort to avoid the barricade he maneuvered the airplane to the left and the left wing struck an unobserved pole of a power line crossing his flight path. The wing held momentarily on the pole, swinging the airplane around 180° before it fell to the highway in an upright position. There were no known witnesses to the accident.

The map the pilot was using had a line drawn from Odessa to the Old Municipal Airport, which is southeast, while the North Concho Airport is located northwest, of San Angelo. As the pilot arrived south of the town, this might have had some bearing on his inability to locate North Concho Airport. The pilot erred in planning his flight so that he would arrive at his destination after sunset. The approximate length of time required for the flight was 80 minutes, making the anticipated time of arrival about 7:35 p.m. CWT, while official sunset was at 6:45 p. m. CWT.

The probable cause of this accident was poor judgment and technique on the part of the pilot, resulting in his failure to avoid an obstruction during an attempted precautionary landing.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs
Secretary