

Adopted May 19, 1944

File No. 4832-43

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

Instructor Arthur David Bright and his student, Rodney Foster Wiggan, were fatally injured in an accident which occurred at Lockwood Airport, Frankfort, Indiana, about 10:20 a.m. on November 24, 1943. Bright held a commercial pilot certificate with single-engine land, C-240 h.p. and flight instructor ratings. He had flown approximately 2294 solo hours, about 600 of which were in the type airplane involved. Wiggan, a War Training Service Navy trainee, held a student pilot certificate and had flown approximately 268 hours. The aircraft, a Jaco UPF-7, IC 32191, owned by the Defense Plant Corporation and being operated by Purdue Aeronautical Corporation, was destroyed by impact and fire.

Bright and Wiggan, accompanied by two other planes, took off from Purdue Airport, West Lafayette, Indiana, about 9:15 a.m., to practice formation flying in an area approximately 3 miles northeast of the airport. About 45 minutes later, the formation landed at Lockwood Airport, some 12 miles southeast of the assigned practice area. After they had been on the ground about 15 minutes, Bright and Wiggan took off and climbed to an altitude of approximately 1000 feet, then descended in a moderate dive to about 75 feet above the airport. This maneuver was followed by a shallow climb which continued until the airplane had reached an altitude of approximately 200 feet. At this point what appeared to be a slow roll to the left was started. However, when the plane was just past the inverted position it nosed down into a diving turn to the right. The right wing struck the ground and the aircraft cartwheeled about 30 feet, then burst into flames.

The airplane was so completely demolished by impact and fire that little could be determined as to its condition prior to the accident. The manner in which the metal propeller blades were twisted indicated that power was being developed at the time of impact. Dual controls were installed and operative. The flight was witnessed by several competent observers, several of whom expressed the opinion that failure of any part of the aircraft prior to impact was very improbable.

This accident was due to the pilot's poor judgment and flying technique which resulted in loss of control of the plane during acrobatic maneuvers performed at a dangerously low altitude.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Doombs
Secretary