

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

Instructor Ralph Russel Peters was seriously injured and his student, Francis K. Kearney, received minor injuries in an accident which occurred approximately 6 miles southeast of Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, about 2:15 p.m. on January 8, 1944. Peters held a commercial pilot certificate with single-engine land, 0-330 h.p. and flight instructor ratings. He had accumulated approximately 2114 solo hours, about 1500 of which were in the type aircraft involved. Kearney, a War Training Service Navy trainee, had flown approximately 13 solo hours. The aircraft, a Waco UPF-7, NC 20973, owned by the Defense Plant Corporation and being operated by Aircraft Services Consolidated, was extensively damaged.

Peters and Kearney took off from the Bloomsburg Airport at approximately 1:26 p.m. for a local instruction flight. About 45 minutes later, after practicing a sequence of maneuvers at approximately 1500 feet, the instructor gave the student a simulated forced landing. Recovery was effected approximately 300 feet above the ground and after climbing about 200 feet, the engine became rough and lost power. Instructor Peters took over the controls, applied carburetor heat and headed toward an open field. As the plane neared the ground, the engine picked up. Believing that he had overcome a carburetor icing condition, Peters decided to continue flight. Shortly thereafter, however, power was almost completely lost and he found himself confronted with the necessity of making a turn at a very low altitude to avoid trees ahead and to reach a field suitable for landing. During this turn the lower left wing struck the ground and the plane cartwheeled and skidded on the bottom of the fuselage approximately 100 feet over a deeply furrowed, frozen field.

A thorough check of the engine revealed no sign of any mechanical failure of the engine and evidence indicated that carburetor icing caused the loss of power which necessitated a forced landing. The pilot stated that on previous occasions he had successfully cleared the engine of carburetor ice by the use of carburetor heat and that in this instance he could have completed a forced landing without damage to the plane had he made a landing when the engine first lost power.

The probable cause of this accident was loss of power at a low altitude, due to carburetor icing.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs  
Secretary