

Adopted June 23, 1944

File No. 400-44

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

Frank Edward Tipper and Victor Walker Bullard were seriously injured in an accident which occurred 650 feet south of the Krist-Port Airport, Farmington, Michigan, about 9:30 a.m. on January 31, 1944. Tipper held a commercial pilot certificate with single-engine land, 0-80 h.p. and flight instructor ratings. He had flown about 1029 solo hours, of which 1000 were in the type airplane involved. Bullard held a student pilot certificate and had flown approximately 60 hours. The airplane, a Taylorcraft BC-65, NC 24405, owned by John E. Rosenkyst and Jack F. Stokan, was demolished.

Tipper arrived at the airport about 9:00 a.m. to find the airplane he expected to fly had been parked outside the hangar during the previous night and the top surfaces of the plane were coated with snow. Tipper and Bullard made an attempt to remove the snow with a broom, and most of it was removed in this manner, but some was crusted and frozen to the surface and Tipper decided to take off without removing it. With Bullard as a passenger, he taxied out to the northwest-southeast runway and took off in a northwesterly direction. After a run of 1200 feet, the airplane became airborne but flew sluggishly, so the pilot climbed to 450 feet and followed a left traffic pattern back toward the southeast end of the runway to effect a landing. While in a left turn during the landing approach, at an altitude of approximately 100 feet, the throttle was reduced and the left wing continued to go down despite the pilot's efforts to bring it up. Full power was then applied but before recovery could be accomplished the airplane struck the ground, left wing first, and came to rest on its nose.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no failure of any part of the airplane 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. Unofficial weather reports indicated that the weather at the time of the accident was: Ceiling estimated 1000 feet, visibility one-half to one mile, light snow, temperature estimated 32°, dew point 31°. Although conditions were conducive to carburetor icing, it is not believed that this contributed to the accident.

It is a well known fact that the presence of ice or frost on an airplane may alter its flying characteristics materially. Either the pilot was unaware of the seriousness of the consequences or he displayed extremely poor judgment in attempting flight without first removing all of the snow from the wings.

The probable cause of this accident was a stall at low altitude, due to crusted snow on the wings of the aircraft.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred W. Robbins  
Secretary