

Adopted: February 14, 1945

File No. 3153-44

REPORT OF THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
on the
Investigation of an Accident Involving Aircraft
In Scheduled Air Carrier Operation

Following an attempted mail pickup, an aircraft owned and operated by All American Aviation, Inc., crashed near State College, Pa., about 9:25 a.m., September 29, 1944, with resultant fatal injuries to Pilot Wilson Amos Scott, serious injuries to his flight mechanic, Robert Harold Taylor, and almost complete destruction of the aircraft.

Scott, age 32, held an airline transport certificate with single-engine land, 0-675 h.p. and flight instructor ratings. He had flown approximately 3486 hours, including 1776 in the type plane involved. Taylor, age 24, held a commercial pilot certificate with a single-engine land, 110-330 h.p. rating and had flown approximately 1600 hours. As flight mechanic, he operated the mail pickup device. The aircraft was a Stinson SR-10C, NC 21129, powered by a Lycoming 245 h.p. engine.

The flight, designated by All American as Trip 8, departed from Allegheny County Airport, Pittsburgh, Pa., at approximately 8.00 a.m. to make aerial deliveries and pickups of mail and express at stations on route to Williamsport, Pa. About 9:20 a.m., during a normal approach to the State College, Pa. pickup station, the mail delivery was completed, but the rope on the incoming mail container broke, leaving the container on the ground. The broken rope was brought into the plane attached to the pickup hook. Believing the messenger on the ground might need the rope before another pickup could be attempted, the pilot decided to fly across the station again and drop the rope. A shallow turn to the left was started with the degree of bank increasing as the radius of the turn decreased. The mechanic stated that upon completion of a 360° turn the indicated airspeed had dropped from 85 m.p.h. to approximately 50 m.p.h. and the aircraft was stalled. It dived through trees and crashed approximately 435 feet south-southwest of the pickup station.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no evidence of failure of any part of the aircraft prior to impact. The flight mechanic stated the plane functioned normally during the entire flight. There were no indications that the pickup rope, hook, or broken container rope had become fouled or interfered in any way with the operation of the plane.

Although the pilot's attention was probably focused on the pickup station over which he intended to pass for the purpose of dropping the rope they had picked up, it is difficult to understand how a pilot of his experience could fail to recognize the approach to a stall in time to take corrective action.

The probable cause of this accident was an inadvertent stall during a steep turn at low altitude.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A Toombs
Secretary