

CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT

Adopted* July 1, 1948

Released* July 6, 1948

NEAR NORRISVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA—APRIL 4, 1948

An air collision near Norrisville, Pennsylvania, at approximately 1025,* April 4, 1948, resulted in fatal injuries to Arden C. Meredith, pilot, and his passenger, Francis P. Meyers. Both aircraft, Aeronca 7AC's, were owned by the Holt Flying Service, Meadville, Pennsylvania. Aeronca NC 82122, flown by Meredith, was demolished while Aeronca NC 82619 was only slightly damaged and its pilot, Fred C. Byham, escaped injury.

About 0925 Pilot Byham took off from Port Meadville and proceeded to an area designated for air work located several miles NNW of the airport. At an altitude between 2,000 and 3,500 feet, he practiced stalls, spins, and other maneuvers. At approximately 0950 Pilot Meredith and his passenger also departed Port Meadville. About 1020 both aircraft were observed flying in a southerly direction at a point approximately two miles north of Norrisville Corners or about seven miles NNW of Port Meadville. Pilot Byham stated that he was returning from his practice area to Port Meadville flying at about 2,000 feet altitude when suddenly the plane operated by Meredith appeared coming up under his right wing in what he described as "an attitude as if making a loop."

Statements of witnesses indicate that the Meredith plane had been doing stalls, spins, and related maneuvers in the area for some time prior to the accident and immediately preceding the accident, while at a slightly lower altitude, made a sharp right turn ending in a steep pull-up which terminated in the collision.

* All times referred to herein are Eastern Standard and based on the 24-hour clock

The left wing of Meredith's plane struck the right wing of Byham's, following which Meredith's plane crashed out of control. Byham, although his plane was damaged, was able to make a safe emergency landing in a field not far from the scene. Parachutes were not worn by occupants of either aircraft.

Both aircraft were certificated and in an airworthy condition prior to the accident. Meredith was a certificated pilot with commercial, multi- and single-engine land, and flight instructor ratings. His total accumulated time as pilot was approximately 1,100 hours. Byham, a certificated pilot with private and single-engine land ratings, had accumulated approximately 112 hours at the time of the accident.

The weather, which was clear at the time and place of the accident, is not considered a contributing factor.

Probable Cause

Upon the basis of available evidence the Board finds that the probable cause of this accident was Pilot Meredith's failure to avoid the other aircraft while maneuvering in its immediate vicinity. Contributing to the accident was the failure of Pilot Byham to maintain a proper lookout.

BY THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD

/s/ JOSEPH J. O'CONNELL, JR.
/s/ OSWALD RYAN
/s/ JOSH LEE
/s/ RUSSELL B. ADAMS

Jones, Member, did not participate.