

Pieces of the plane's wings, none larger than kindling wood, were found strewn over the 300-foot area. The bodies of the three men were crushed into the ground with the plane, upside down, twisted and torn, over them.

A wristwatch found on one of the victims had stopped at 10:07.

It is assumed that Coyle was piloting the plane when it crashed. He was the only one of the three carrying a pilot's license. The private plane was reportedly en route to Buffalo Air Park, Gardenville, from Detroit.

According to a flight plan filed with the CAA, the plane was due to arrive at Gardenville at 10:15 P.M. Coyle had filed a visual flight plan upon his departure from the municipal airport in Detroit.

No radio contact was reported between the plane and the Buffalo airport. Coyle is believed to have strayed off his course. The CAA said there was a 4,000-foot ceiling at Buffalo.

First report of the crash came shortly before 11 P.M. when an unidentified woman telephoned the airport with news that a plane had crashed nearby.

Lawrence Anderson, who lives on a farm adjacent to the James farm, heard the crash.

"My wife and I heard this low-flying plane circling overhead several times," he said. "Then we heard this awful crash followed by quiet. I told my wife, 'The plane's crashed, let's get going!'"

Mr. Anderson, Mr. James, and Burwin (Swat) Erickson, Jr., Matson Road, found the wreckage about a quarter-mile back from the James house. The three occupants of the plane were dead, apparently killed instantly.

The three men then returned and notified the Jamestown airport. The Chautauqua County Sheriff's Department was then notified. Ellicott Town Officer Elmer Widlund and Deputy Sheriff Fred Moore were the first police officers to arrive. Others soon followed along with the Lakewood Fire Department's land rescue unit, under the direction of Fire Chief Larry Bramstong.

The search party had a difficult time finding its way back to the wreckage, stumbling through the darkened woods for some 30 minutes before locating the crash site.

Within minutes the Lakewood unit had set up flood lights and Coroner Samuel T. Bowers began the task of identifying the victims. Some 50 spectators soon arrived at the scene.

After identification, the bodies were taken to Powers Funeral Home by the Jamestown Ambulance Service. This morning, arrangements were made to return the bodies to Buffalo. Coroner Bowers issued certificates of accidental death.

Town Officer Widlund said arrangements will be made to remove the wreckage when the investigation is complete.