

# Weather Blamed For Plane Crash

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## Cab Makes Report Following Probe of Fatal Accident Here

Weather conditions which included ground fog and poor visibility were mainly responsible for the crash of a single-engine Bellanca plane in which a Buffalo pilot and two Cheektowaga men were killed about 11 P.M. June 29 in a densely-wooded area a mile northwest of Jamestown Municipal Airport.

This was announced today by the Civil Aeronautics Board after an investigation into the fatal accident. The CAB reported that there was no indication of mechanical malfunctioning of the aircraft or its engine and that both fuel tanks of the plane contained fuel.

Killed in the crash were: Edward C. Coyle, 44, Buffalo, owner and pilot of the plane; and Arthur M. Michalski, 26, and Conrad R. Ratajczak, 33, both of Cheektowaga, passengers.

The men had left Detroit at 7:32 EST and were due to arrive at Buffalo about 9:12 EST.

The CAB stated that the airport's runway lights were on and that a rotating beacon at the airport was operating. The Board noted, however, that according to witnesses a dense ground fog existed at the airport and that runway lights which were on were not visible from the hangar, a distance of about 500 feet away.

The plane crashed in the woods after circling the airport several times in an apparent attempt to land.

The CAB said that the plane was some 35 miles south of its course when the crash occurred. Coyle had filed a visual-flight plan in Detroit before leaving for Buffalo, his intended landing point. According to his flight plan, he was to follow the south shore of Lake Erie to Buffalo.

Weather reports from Dunkirk, the nearest reporting point, at the time of the crash indicated a ceiling of 1,000 feet overcast, six miles visibility with haze, and northeast wind of 19 miles per hour. Weather conditions were not officially checked at Jamestown but CAB officials said that weather conditions near the airport apparently were below minimum.

CAB investigators reported that the plane's ignition switch was on with the throttle in an open position. The plane's equipment included low and very high frequency transmitters and receivers. All VHF equipment was found in an off position and the other radio equipment was too badly damaged to be examined. However, a check of all radio stations enroute showed that no radio contact was made by the plane during its flight.