

No. 20Gold Belt Air Services Ltd., aircraft Noorduyn Norseman IV, CF-PAA
made emergency forced landing due to engine failure
on Lake Mondor, P.Q. - 9 May 1952Circumstances

At about 1015 hours EDST on 9 May 1952, Aircraft CF-PAA, owned by Gold Belt Air Services Ltd., took off on a test flight from Lac à la Tortue, P.Q. with five passengers on board.

The aircraft climbed on a northwesterly heading to about 2 100 feet when, after an elapsed time of about ten minutes, the engine failed. The emergency forced landing which was attempted on the nearest lake (Lake Mondor), appears to have been made downwind. The first contact with the water was made approximately in the middle of the lake which was about three-quarters of a mile long. The aircraft bounced, settled on the water again about 200 feet from the east end of the lake and then ran up on the shore. In the ensuing collision it was substantially damaged by trees and a small cottage. Minor injuries were sustained by two of the passengers.

Investigation and Evidence

Examination of the aircraft disclosed that it was equipped with a front belly tank in addition to the normal wing tanks and that the placard plate for fuel tank selection gave no indication that a belly tank was installed. Examination of the fuel lines and selector valve established that when the selector in the cockpit indicated "both on", the selector was on the belly tank.

A few days before the accident, 5 gallons of gasoline was put into the belly tank when testing the tanks for leaks. It was established that no further fuel was put in the belly tank before the accident although the wing tanks were filled. The aircraft was test flown on 8 May, and fuel was used from all three tanks. On the last flight of the aircraft on 8 May, fuel was used from the belly tank only.

It was established that the pilot was not aware that the aircraft was fitted with a belly tank and that in selecting "both on" he believed that he had selected both wing tanks. Examination of the belly tank after the accident showed it to be empty and undamaged.

There was no evidence of failure or malfunctioning of the airframe, engine or controls.

Weather was not a factor in the accident.

Probable Cause

After an emergency forced landing caused by the exhaustion of fuel from the belly tank the aircraft hit obstructions on the shore line. A contributing factor is considered to have been misleading information given by the placard on the fuel selector valve.