

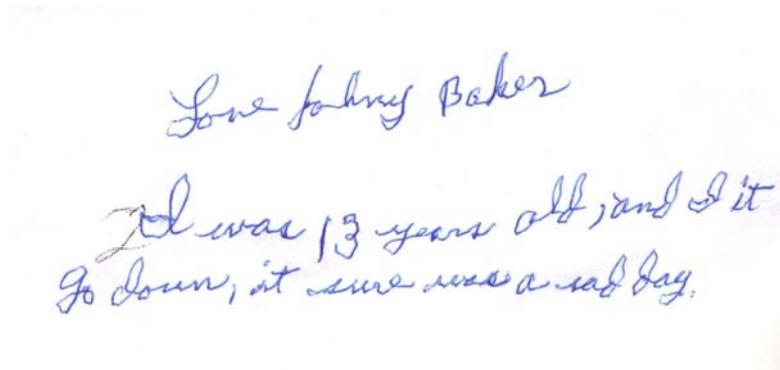
# Two Killed in Noonan Crash Last Saturday

The Divide County Journal  
Crosby, North Dakota  
Friday, July 24, 1936

We only have poor quality photocopies of this article.

Ray and Carol toured North Dakota, looking for Carol's oil properties, at the end of April, 2008. When in Noonan, they went into a bar/restaurant and asked the bartender if he knew of anyone who still lived there who was old enough to remember a plane crash that happened in 1936. The bartender said that there was an old man who lived nearby and had always lived in Noonan. So, Ray and Carol went to his house and found Johny Baker. Not only did Mr. Baker remember the crash, he saw the plane go down! When asked, he said that he did think photos were taken, and would send them if he found them.

In December of 2009, Johny Baker called Ray. He'd found two pictures! They arrived on January 2, 2010, along with the upcoming photocopy of the 1936 article. On the article's second page, Mr. Baker wrote:



Love Johny Baker

I was 13 years old, and I it  
go down, it sure was a sad day.

Love Johny Baker

I was 13 years old,  
and I [saw] it go down,  
it sure was a sad day.

I'll include the two photos he found after the article.

# TWO KILLED IN NOONAN CRASH LAST SATURDAY

Old Settlers Day Celebration Mar-  
red in Fatal Fall of  
Airplane

Tragedy marred the festivities planned for the Old Settlers Day celebration at Noonan last Saturday, when sudden death appeared on the scene and in the twinkling of an eye, crushed out the lives of two people, in an airplane crash. The dead are Mrs. Ed. Canfield, well known woman pilot of Williston and Albert Lee, a resident of Noonan for several years and himself an amateur pilot.

While there is no way of knowing just how the accident happened, Mr. Canfield, husband of the dead aviatrix, who witnessed the crash stated his views.

In his mind, he said, there was no doubt that there had been an attempt by each occupant to seize control of the ship thru the dual control levers. Lee, an amateur pilot, had hired Mrs. Canfield to take him aloft for 15 minutes of flying, to apply on his time toward gaining a higher license. When they attempted to land, Canfield believed, Lee maintained control of the ship and would not turn the "stick" over to the woman pilot.

## Flew "Coyote Special"

Mr. and Mrs. Canfield had each flown a ship to Noonan the day of the tragedy, and each was taking passengers aloft. Dorothea Canfield was piloting the smaller of the two planes, the "Coyote Special," flown hundreds of miles during the last several years in bagging a total of 1,282 coyotes from the air.

Canfield said that Lee arrived at the field adjoining town and began to discuss aviation, telling of his own amateur license and of a ship which he had maintained at Noonan which was not now in flying order.

Lee bargained for 15 minutes of flying time in the ship which the Canfields advertised as a "two place enclosed monoplane, equipped with dual controls as an ideal training and patrol ship."

After an estimated 15 or 20 minutes in the air, the plane swooped downward as if to land, then rose again with the throttle opened.

The plane rose, circled again. Then, suddenly, the plane roared nose-down to the ground, coming down between telephone and high-line wires, near a roadside several blocks northwest of town.

It nosed straight into the ground, and stood on end, tail high in the air. Spectators rushed to the scene of the crash, pulled down the ship's tail, removed the victims.

## Plane Passed Inspection

The coroner said that practically every bone in the body of each had been broken. Each had suffered lacerations and a fracture of the base of the skull.

The plane was one of four being used in the Canfield flying circus.

Recently equipped with a new motor and recently overhauled, the ship had been used for several years by the Canfields. The Williston pilot said that the plane was in "excellent condition." This was borne out, it was said, by the government inspector, who said that he found no evidence of there being defective mechanical equipment previous to the crash.

## Graduate at Williston

Dorothea Canfield was born in Missouri 27 years ago, her parents being Mr. and Mrs. Homer Jackson, her mother's maiden name Gaynelle Settle, a sister of John and T. E. Settle of Williston.

Her father died when she was six years old and some years later her mother married J. E. Busse of Fargo, who adopted the child as his own. Mrs. Busse died in 1918 and Busse died about two months later.

Mrs. Canfield was a graduate of the Williston high school and later

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attended Carleton College at Northfield, Minn.

She was one of Canfield's first students in aviation when he came to Williston in 1928. After an "air romance," they were married in 1929. She was the second woman in the state to receive recognition as a woman pilot.

After receiving her license as transport pilot, she often flew passengers and served as an instructor for aviation students. During the last eight years she had accumulated hundreds of hours of flying and was considered thoroly skilled in her art, never having an accident until the fatal crash.

Lee, a resident of Noonan for a number of years and employe. of the Baukol-Noonan Lignite Coal company since the Noonan mines were opened had been employed as a "craner," one of the operators of the

mines large steam shovel used for stripping earth from underlying veins of coal.

He is survived by his wife and five children.

Canfield said that investigation of the wrecked plane showed that the throttle still remained open and the ignition switch on after the crash, showing he believed, that his wife had struggled to gain control of the ship and had had no opportunity to shut off the motor.

The aeronautical inspector paid tribute at Williston to the dead flyer, saying, "Mrs. Canfield was one of the best women pilots that I have ever known."

## Quit Farming for Air

Canfield is a veteran in North Dakota aviation having been a pilot since the early 20's.

In earlier days he had been a farmer at Fullerton, N. D., where he took up aviation as a sport and hobby. Later he abandoned farming operations and devoted his full time to flying.



## THE DIVIDE COU

In 1928 he went to Williston and established the Canfield Flying service. The municipal port there today bears his name.

Posters of the Noonan celebration advised that:

"To date the Flying Canfields have shot and picked up 1,282 coyotes from this little ship (Coyote Special), with 362 of them down this past winter."

That same plane, which Dorothea Canfield had planned to pilot in a demonstration of methods of shooting coyotes from the air, crashed before the show had got under way.

Said the poster further:

"Ed Canfield is a veteran pilot of 16 years continuous flying. To May 25, 1936, Canfield's log book showed 5,717 hours in the air, 34,507 flights made, and 73,541 passengers carried, without a single accident to a passenger."

"Dorothea Canfield, nationally known aviatrix, is one of the few women to hold a transport license and the only woman flyer to successfully engage in the hazardous occupation of hunting coyotes from the air. She is on her seventh year of flying without an accident of any kind."

Following is an Associated Press story of the coroners inquest held at Noonan on Tuesday:

A coroner's jury which met here in a four-hour session Monday afternoon today released the opinion that "Dorothea Canfield and Albert Lee came to their death on July 18, 1936, at Noonan at about 2:30 p. m. by reason of an airplane crash, the cause of said crash being unknown."

Testimony presented to the coroner's jury indicated the crash came as the result of a "stall" at low altitude, and not thru a plunge to earth in a "power dive" as previously had been indicated in some accounts of the tragedy.

### Cause Not Determined

Tho the exact cause of the crash could not be determined, testimony of the group of witnesses, from the several thousand persons who had gathered at Noonan Saturday to celebrate the annual old settlers day, aided in reconstructing a probable picture of what took place, according to R. H. Points of Crosby, Divide county state's attorney.

State's Attorney Points, with County Coroner C. I. Rollefson, Crosby, conducted the hearing in the Divide county Memorial hall here.

Testimony was presented by several persons, the attorney said, to the effect Lee had made plans the evening preceding the celebration to go aloft in Mrs. Canfield's ship. He was interested, it was said, in the dual control feature of the "Coyote Special" ill-fated plane which later crashed.

Lee was reported as having said both the evening preceding and the morning of the flight he was going to do the flying himself.

Witnesses brot out the following, according to the coroner's report:

### Flew at Low Altitudes

Mrs. Canfield and Lee rose from the landing field for about 15 minutes of flying. Some spectators believed that Lee was piloting the ship thruout the flight.

The ship circled about the city, at a low height. Witnesses declared that Lee, while piloting his own airplane, which he previously had maintained at the local airport, had been warned by city officials either to fly at greater height or over rural areas.

The plane swooped toward the field as if to land, then rose again as tho the pilot decided to make a second attempt to land.

One witness said he saw Mrs. Canfield wave her handkerchief at her husband who stood at the edge of the crowd on the landing field.

Others declared that as the plane zoomed up, suddenly its siren was turned on, its scream plainly audible above the motor's roar.

### Failed to Gain Height

Not far below the plane appeared a row of highline wires, paralleled at a short distance by telephone wires. The ship wobbled a bit, said spectators, and did not seem to be under full control, and the plane began an upward climb, as if to allow ample clearance, said witnesses. The ship's nose pointed skyward gaining altitude. But as it climbed, it lost flying speed and the ship went into a stall at low altitude.

Teetering for a moment, suddenly the "Coyote Special" nosed over

## INTY JOURNAL, CROSBY, NORTH

and plummeted, propeller-first, to the ground. The occupants were removed, their bones broken and skulls fractured.

Members of the coroner's jury, who heard testimony of the witnesses were County Commissioner Albert Kimball, John Steiner and Peter J. Brown, all of Noonan.

Funeral services for the two victims were held on Tuesday afternoon, Mrs. Canfield's being held at Williston, from the Congregational church with Rev. Alex Macbeth officiating. Burial was made in the Riverside cemetery at that place. Pall bearers were all aviators from distant points in the northwest. Mrs. Canfield is survived by her husband and two children; one four and one-half and the other two and one-half years old.

Funeral services for Lee were held from the Bethlehem Lutheran church at Noonan on Tuesday afternoon, with Rev. J. W. Rosholt of Columbus officiating. Burial was made in the cemetery near that city. Lee is survived by his wife and five small children. Mrs. Lee whose maiden name was Johnson, was a daughter of the late Henry Johnson, who farmed south of Crosby for several years before his death. The family moved to the Noonan vicinity several years ago and have since been residing in Mentor township.

*Love Johnny Baker*

*It was 13 years old, and  
to down, it sure was a sad*

