

Adopted: March 24, 1944

File No. 2404-43

REPORT OF THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
on the
Investigation of an Accident Involving Aircraft
During a Local Passenger Flight

Pilot Reginald James Snover and his two passengers, Miss Glenna Ladd and Floyd Kelly, were seriously injured in an accident which occurred about three-fourths mile south of Burns Airport, Dearborn, Michigan, at approximately 5 50 p.m. on June 6, 1943. Snover held a commercial pilot certificate with a single-engine land, 0-325 h.p. rating. He had flown about 880 hours, 338 of which were in the type of aircraft involved. Neither Miss Ladd nor Kelly was certificated as a pilot. The aircraft, a Fairchild KR-34-C, NC 205M, owned by Ronald Chappell, was extensively damaged.

Pilot Snover, with Kelly in the left front seat and Miss Ladd in the right, took off from Burns Airport at approximately 5:50 p.m. on a local flight. The take-off was made toward the south and when an altitude of around 200 to 250 feet had been reached the engine cut out. The pilot pumped the throttle and the engine picked up momentarily, then stopped. Snover attempted to land straight ahead in a small clearing surrounded by trees but during his landing approach he made a shallow-banked "S" turn to avoid a tree in his flight path, and stalled the plane. It fell off and struck the ground on the nose and landing gear at an angle of about 40°.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no evidence of failure of any part of the aircraft prior to the accident. A teardown inspection of the engine disclosed no reason for its stoppage. The fuel supply was ample. Dual throttle, spark, and fuel mixture controls were connected and one set was located on the left side of the front cockpit adjacent to Passenger Kelly's seat. It is possible that Kelly may have inadvertently moved the fuel mixture control lever to the lean position sometime after the take-off, which could have caused the engine to stop. The spark and mixture control handles in the front cockpit were found bent down and forward, with the mixture control in the full lean position, and were stained with blood. The fact that Kelly's left hand was badly lacerated indicated that he might have still had his hand on them when the crash occurred. The aircraft appeared to have been properly maintained and in airworthy condition prior to the accident.

While engine stoppage was definitely a contributing factor, the probable cause of the accident was an inadvertent stall during an emergency landing.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs
Secretary