

Adopted: January 10, 1944

File No. 2843-43

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

Earl Franklin Reynolds, age 19, was fatally injured and his passenger, W. T. Stilley, age 17, received serious injuries in an accident which occurred near the Country Club Airport, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, about 7:25 p.m. on June 15, 1943. Reynolds held a student pilot certificate and had accumulated approximately 80 hours of solo flight time. Stilley had formerly held a student pilot certificate which expired May 29, 1943. He was employed as a mechanic's helper at the Country Club Airport. The aircraft, an Interstate Cadet S-1A-90F, NC 37347, owned by Southern Aviation, Inc., was demolished.

Reynolds secured clearance for a local solo practice flight and, accompanied by Stilley, took off from the Country Club Airport at about 6:50 p.m. About 30 minutes later they were observed by the only known witness to the accident flying over an auxiliary landing field approximately 2 1/2 miles east-southeast of the airport. The aircraft approached the field and the pilot made a "touch" landing toward the south, during which the wheels contacted the ground about one-third of the distance of the field and the plane rolled 50 to 75 yards without the tail touching the ground. The pilot then applied power, took off and started a turn to the left with the left wing tip approximately 15 feet above the ground. When the aircraft had turned about 90° in an easterly direction (cross-wind) the nose dropped and the left wing tip struck the ground. The plane cartwheeled onto the right wing and stopped in an upright position about 135 feet from the point of first impact.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no indication of failure of any part of the aircraft prior to the accident. Dual controls were installed and operative. Weather conditions were favorable with unlimited ceiling and visibility and a south wind estimated at 25 m.p.h. The auxiliary field being used has a north-south grass runway with no obstructions at either end. All of the surrounding terrain is exceptionally smooth. The witness, a friend of the pilot, described the aircraft's maneuvers and stated, "Earl Reynolds told me before that he and Bud Stilley would be flying around the field about 7:00 p.m. and for me to come over to the auxiliary field."

Pilot Reynolds, employed by Southern Aviation, Inc., as a helper in the maintenance of aircraft, had received flight instruction during his spare time and had permission to fly solo in the subject aircraft to build up his flying time. Investigation revealed that he had taken Stilley with him on previous flights without the consent or knowledge of the operator and had secured clearance without the clearance officer being aware that a passenger would be carried.

It appears that Pilot Reynolds was attempting to "show off" at an extremely low altitude immediately after his wheel landing, and due to his inexperience and a fairly strong wind, he permitted the aircraft to slip into the ground.

This accident resulted from the pilot's loss of control of the aircraft while maneuvering at an extremely low altitude.

BY THE BOARD

s/ Fred A. Tombs  
Secretary