

Adopted: May 1, 1944

File No. 5236-43

REPORT OF THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
on the
Investigation of a Propeller Accident

Ernest Varner was seriously injured by an aircraft propeller at Carleton Airport, Stanton, Minnesota, about 4:00 p.m., December 10, 1943. ~~Varner, aged 32, was home-certificated airman, but had been employed by Hinck Flying Service, Inc. as a lineman for the past 18 months.~~ Instructor Glen Arthur Slack was in the airplane at the time of the accident. He held a commercial pilot certificate with single-engine land, 0-330 h.p., and flight instructor ratings, and had been issued a waiver for defective hearing. He had flown 3010 solo hours, of which 30 hours were in the type airplane involved. The aircraft, a Howard DGA-18K, NC 39656, owned by the Defense Plant Corporation, was not damaged.

Varner, standing in front of the propeller, and Slack, seated in the aircraft, were preparing to start the engine. Varner called for the throttle to be pumped six times, to which Slack complied while Varner pulled the propeller through several times. Slack, thinking he heard Varner call "contact," turned the ignition switch "on" and as the propeller was being pulled through again, the engine started. The propeller struck Varner's left arm between the elbow and wrist, breaking both bones in two places. Slack turned the switch off immediately and went to the assistance of Varner.

The cause of this accident was carelessness on the part of both Slack and Varner; Slack, for turning the ignition "on" when he was not sure Varner had called "contact," and Varner, for failure to turn the propeller in such a manner as to be in the clear in the event the engine started.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs
Secretary