

Adopted: July 28, 1944

File No. 1581-44

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

Turns at 50 feet altitude, followed by a stall, resulted in a crash inflicting critical injuries on Student Pilot Dee Reese, Jr., age 26, of Corpus Christi, Texas. The accident occurred about 12:30 p.m. on May 18, 1944, three miles northwest of Falfurrias, Texas.

The pilot's flying experience could not be definitely determined. A new log book, with the first entry April 3, 1944, indicated he had received approximately five hours dual and had flown nine hours solo from April 3 to the time of the accident. Mrs. Reese stated she believed her husband had flown about 45 solo hours. The aircraft, a Piper J4A, NC 27809, owned by H. L. Hartwig of San Antonio, Texas, received extensive damage.

Reese took off about 8:30 a.m. from Bexar County Airport at San Antonio, Texas, for a cross-country flight. At approximately 12:30 p.m. the aircraft was observed at the field where the accident occurred, a 30-acre level field suitable for landing. Witnesses said Reese dragged the field at a height estimated as 15 feet, then made a normal landing. He had expected to meet Gene Hurst of Corpus Christi, Texas, his half-brother, but when he found Hurst had not arrived, he took off again. Immediately after the take-off, Hurst's car approached the field along a country road from the north. Reese circled and came back over the field, flying east into a 20 m.p.h. wind at about 50 feet altitude. At a point near the center of the field, he started a left turn but after turning approximately 90°, the aircraft fell out of the turn and struck the ground nose first.

Investigation disclosed power was being developed at the time of impact. Witnesses said the engine sounded as though it were operating normally.

The probable cause of this accident was a stall during a turn at an altitude so low recovery could not be effected.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs  
Secretary