

Christen Eagle II, G-EGAL

AAIB Bulletin No: 11/2001 **Ref:** EW/G2001/07/37 **Category:** 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Christen Eagle II, G-EGAL	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming AEIO-360-A1D piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1995	
Date & Time (UTC):	30 July 2001 at 1730 hrs	
Location:	Swanborough Farm, Near Kingston	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - None	Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Damage to landing gear and adjacent fuselage structure, propeller and engine	
Commander's Licence:	Airline Transport Pilots Licence	
Commander's Age:	53 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	18,370 hours (of which 118 were on type)	
	Last 90 days - 199 hours	
	Last 28 days - 55 hours	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

The pilot reported that during his pre-flight external inspection he had noted that the right wheel spat was loose. He had removed the spat to investigate the problem, and found that its mounting plate had a fatigue fracture across its width. Pending weld repair of the plate, he considered that the flight could be conducted satisfactorily without the spat and mounting plate. The spat had been secured by four nuts on four protruding threaded studs which, due to their size and location, he believed were merely studs which secured the mounting plate for the spat. Since the studs did not appear to be in very good condition, the pilot decided not to refit the nuts in case the stud threads would be subject to more wear, before the spat was replaced on the following day.

The biplane was duly taxied out normally, but during the take off roll the right landing gear wheel departed the aircraft and the right leg dug into the grass surface. The aircraft swung to the right and the landing gear legs collapsed just before it slid to a halt in a nose down attitude after some 25

metres. The pilot switched off the fuel and switches before evacuating the aircraft with his passenger; both occupants were uninjured.

After the accident, the pilot realised that the four nuts which had not been re-fitted had in fact also secured four bolts which attached the wheel assembly to the right landing gear leg.