

**AAIB Bulletin No: 6/93**

**Ref: EW/G93/04/09**

**Category: 1c**

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Aeronca 11AC Chief, G-BSTC

**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Continental A65-8 piston engine

**Year of Manufacture:** 1946

**Date & Time (UTC):** 18 April 1993 at 1600 hrs

**Location:** Henstridge Airfield, Somerset

**Type of Flight:** Private

**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1                      Passengers - 1

**Injuries:** Crew - Minor                      Passengers - Minor

**Nature of Damage:** Shattered windscreen with substantial damage to propeller, landing gear, both wing tips, tailplane and rudder

**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence

**Commander's Age:** 61 years

**Commander's Flying Experience:** 614 hours (of which 7 were on type)  
Last 90 days - 3 hours  
Last 28 days - 3 hours

**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and further enquiries by the AAIB

The pilot was accompanied by a passenger, who was part owner of the aircraft but not a qualified pilot himself. He flew the aircraft from its home base at Watchford Farm, Yarcombe, Devon to participate in the Popular Flying Association 'Wessex Strut Fly-In' at Henstridge Airfield. The weather was fine with a surface wind of 280°/10 to 15 kt, visibility 10 km and 6 oktas of cloud at 2,000 feet.

At approximately 1600 hrs the aircraft prepared to return to its home base using Runway 25 for departure. The asphalt and concrete runway, which was dry at the time of the accident, is 750 metres long and 26 metres wide. Running parallel with the runway approximately 80 feet to the south is a barbed wire fence which stands 5 feet high.

Witnesses stated that during the take off run the aircraft accelerated a distance of approximately 900 feet before 'lifting off' and gaining height between 10 to 20 feet. They reported that the engine then 'cut' causing the aircraft to descend and bounce on its main landing gear. The engine then

restarted, the aircraft accelerated and, after travelling a short distance, attempted to take off again. As it became airborne, the moderate crosswind caused the aircraft to drift to the south onto a collision course with the barbed wire fence. In order to avoid the obstruction the pilot pitched the aircraft progressively nose up reaching a height of between 30 and 50 feet. At this point the aircraft stalled and entered the initial rotation of a spin to the left. As the aircraft reached 90° of left bank the left wing tip contacted the ground. The aircraft then cartwheeled onto its nose and right wing tip eventually coming to rest in an upright position having slewed through 180°. The pilot and passenger, who were wearing 'lap diagonal' seat belts, received only minor cuts and bruises. They vacated the aircraft through the normal exits. The Red Cross, Fire and Rescue services attended the scene almost immediately.

The pilot reported that the possible cause of the accident was his lack of experience on type in crosswind conditions.