



THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

FINAL

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Pilot Dies In Crash Here

SCARED AS JET HITS HOME



Red Lineup Soon

MOSCOW (AP) — Premier Khrushchev will disclose the makeup of his new government Monday, it was announced today before the Council of the Union, one of Russia's two houses of parliament.

Wreckage Found

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — The wreckage of a B25 was found today in an open field near here. Three bodies were recovered by highway patrolmen.

Mr. What Wins

AINTREE, England (AP) — Mr. What won the 112th running of the Grand National Steeplechase today. Tiberetta was second and Green Drill third in the field of 31 starters.

4 Die In Wreck

SARASOTA, Fla. (AP) — Four persons were killed today when an automobile in which they were riding smashed into a palm tree at 80-mile-an-hour speed, police said.

AP Vet Dies

BOSTON (AP) — Joseph E. Sharkey, a pioneering foreign correspondent in 40 years of service with the Associated Press, died early today of pneumonia at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. He was 81.

Mt. Etna Roars

CATANIA, Sicily (AP) — Mount Etna speeded fire and smoke last night after several weeks of relative quiet. Lava flowed down 300 to 400 yards from the northeast crater of the volcano.

Singer Ill

HOLLYWOOD (AP) — Keely Smith, nightclub entertainer and wife of band leader Louis Prima, undergoes surgery today. She became ill during her act at a Las Vegas, Nev., hotel yesterday.

Lad, 12, Faces Murder Trial

WOODWARD, Okla. (AP) — A murder charge has been lodged against 12-year-old Robert Smith in the shooting of Floyd Blair last Sunday.

Robert and his brother David, 10, were together when Blair was shot at his grocery store. Police said the boys had intended to commit robbery.



Today's
Weather

Mostly fair and mild today, increasing cloudiness with occasional rain beginning tonight. Rain with risk of thunderstorms tomorrow.

Low this morning—37
Low tomorrow morning—42
High today—63
High yesterday—55
High tomorrow—55
Sunrise today 6:15 a.m.;
sunset today 6:42 p.m.

More Weather Data on Page 3-A



This Is How The Scene Looked Minutes After A Jet Crashed Into A Mecklenburg Home Before Dawn

Light Plane Hunt Begins

Civil Air Patrol planes began a route search between here and Asheville today, seeking a small private plane missing since yesterday afternoon with two Bennettsville, S.C., businessmen.

"Weather is holding us up badly this morning," said a CAP spokesman at the search headquarters here. He said several CAP planes from Eastern North Carolina took off to join the search but had to land at other airfields before reaching Charlotte because of the weather.

The Civil Air Patrol said the plane, piloted by Ervin Powers, 41, carried his brother, Robert W. Powers, 29, as a passenger.

The craft, believed to be a three-place Stinson, left Bennettsville in the early afternoon. Its last contact was a call to the Charlotte Municipal Airport at 1:41 p.m., asking for Asheville weather information. The plane was due at Asheville-Hendersonville Airport at 2:25 p.m.

The two men are sons of J. L. Powers, owner of one of the South's largest plumbing and heating contracting firms. Robert Powers, immediate past mayor of Bennettsville, managed the firm's operations.

A CAP spokesman said Ervin Powers was told by the airport tower here that the Asheville area was overcast, with a 1,200-foot ceiling and visibility of seven miles. The spokesman said a pilot familiar with the mountain area between here and Asheville should not have been unduly handicapped by the weather.

The two were en route to Asheville on a business trip.

Robert Powers, an engineer, has a wife and five children. Ervin Powers, plumbing and heating contractor, has a wife and three children.

Cubans Hungry

BROWNSVILLE, Tex. (AP) — Thirty-six protesting Cubans, foodless since Wednesday night, passed up breakfast in the county jail today.



Survivors Included, L To R, Mrs. Ledford, Herbert White, Mrs. Wiley And Mrs. White —PILOT CRASHED NEAR FAMILY—

Mother, Sister Waited At Airport

By ANN SAWYER
News Staff Writer

The mother and sister of Lt. Wendell Ritchie Miller were waiting for him in their car at the airport early this morning when his jet crashed about a quarter of a mile from them.

They drove to Charlotte from Salisbury to meet him after he called about 10:30 last night, saying he was leaving Vance Air Force Base, Endicott, Okla.

Lt. Miller stopped at West Palm Beach, Fla., to leave a passenger and to refuel.

His mother and sister, Mrs. Clancy Miller and Elizabeth, arrived at the airport about 2:30 a.m.

Lt. Miller's wife, the former Miss Roberta Harris of Atlanta, Ga., is in Endicott. Their first child is expected in June.

Other survivors are his father, Clancy Miller of Salisbury, and a sister, Mrs. Mary M. Carter, Winston-Salem.

The 35-year-old pilot, a native of Salisbury, graduated from Boyden High School here. He was a 1955 graduate of Georgia Tech.

After indoctrination at Lackland Air Force Base, Lt. Miller took his primary at Kinston and his basic training at Big Springs, before being based at Vance Air Force Base.

Lt. Miller's body was to be taken to Salisbury today.

Minutes before the crash, Mrs. Miller and her daughter were waiting in their car at the Air National Guard gate.

They were notified of the crash by Col. William J. Payne and Capt. W. H. Strahoun, who

handled arrangements until other members of the family arrived.

Evening Prayer

Dear Lord, we thank Thee for the inspiration of prayers we have heard. Some of them have been abiding blessings to us. Add grace to grace in our lives that we may be a help to others, as others have been a blessing to us. In Christ's name and for His sake . . . Amen.

Salisbury Officer Killed In Landing

By ANN SAWYER and JULIAN SCHEER
News Staff Writers

An Air Force T-33 jet crashed into a local home early today carrying the pilot to his death but miraculously sparing the lives of nine sleeping residents.

First Lt. Wendell Ritchie Miller, 24-year-old Salisbury native, failed in his attempt to make an emergency landing at fog-shrouded Douglas Municipal Airport at 4:44 a.m.

His two-seated jet trainer plowed into the one-story frame home occupied by the White and Ledford families at Dowd Rd. and Harlee Ave., 5631 Old Gastonia Rd.

The nine occupants of the home were uninjured. The building, owned by C. R. McCoy, burned.

Lt. Miller, on a flight from Endicott, Okla., via West Palm Beach, Fla., had called the Charlotte tower a few minutes earlier requesting permission for an emergency landing. He said he had fuel for only 10 minutes.

He was cleared for an approach on runway five, a southwest to northeast strip. Visibility was near zero when he missed the first approach and was, apparently, about to circle for a second approach when his aircraft struck trees and fell into the home a half-mile to the north and west of the runway.

HITS BEDROOM

The aircraft came to rest in the bedroom occupied by 20-year-old Herbert James White and his brother, 11-year-old Tony White. It entered, in a westerly direction, from the rear of the house and through a porch.

The White boys were covered with household articles and the front end of the bedroom was blown out. The boys scrambled from the room.

The rest of the family left immediately, fleeing in a car because they feared an explosion.

Waiting at the N. C. Air National Guard hangar for Lt. Miller were his mother, Mrs. Clancy E. Miller, and sister, Elizabeth, both of Salisbury.

Also surviving is his father, Clancy E. Miller, a retired Salisbury florist, and another sister, Mrs. Mary M. Carter of Winston-Salem. The Millers live at 300 Main Ave. in Salisbury.

WIFE IN OKLAHOMA

Lt. Miller's wife, the former Roberta Harris of Atlanta, Ga., lives at Lt. Miller's home base, Vance Air Force Base, Endicott, Okla. Miller is expecting a child.

The body was taken to Samsel Funeral Home, Salisbury.

The eight-room house was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Grace Ledford and their two children, James, 9, and Peggy, 10, and Mrs. Velma White, her daughter, Mrs. Beatrice White Wiley, 17, and Mrs. Wiley's 10-month-old daughter, Jane. Herbert James White and Tony White, Mrs. White's sons, were also residents.

"I heard a singing," Herbert White said, "and then I heard something knocking over trees. Then I heard this loud noise and everything was blown over on us in bed."

Herbert pulled brother Tony outside and then tried to reenter the building to help the others get out.

It was so hot all of a sudden that he could hardly stand it," he said.

The others grabbed sheets to cover themselves in the damp, downy fog and rushed from the house in night clothes.

Grace Ledford told them, "It might explode!"

By that time it "seemed to be a plane," Herbert said.

"Let's get in the car and take it before it explodes," Ledford said.

MET FIREMEN

The nine of them pulled away from the house in the car, fleeing toward Wilkinson Blvd. Before they reached the thoroughfare, they met firemen coming the other way and returned to the scene.

Although there was no explosion, the sound of the crash was heard over a wide area. A telephone call to the Wilkinson Blvd. Volunteer Fire Dept., and assistant airport manager Dick Beatty

'It Sounded Like A Loud Thunder Clap'

By JOHN KILGO
News Staff Writer

"It sounded like a loud clap of thunder . . . Then there was a great big flash that looked like the brightest streak of lightning I'd ever seen."

Speaking with a voice filled with emotion, Mrs. Velma White, 38, described the noise made by a jet airplane that crashed into her house on the Old Dowd Rd. at 4:44 this morning.

"It was nine of us in there at the time," she said. "I'm just thankful, real thankful, that we all got out alive. I don't know how we did it."

Mrs. White lives in the house with her daughters and sons, and their families.

"I'd been having a bad cramp in my leg all night long," she said. "About 4:40 this morning the leg really started hurting me. My son, Herbert, hollered to me and told me to walk on it."

HAD GOTTEN UP

"I'd just got up to start walking when I heard this loud roar. It sounded like a loud clap of thunder. And then there was a bright streak that looked like lightning."

"I ran to every room in the house screaming, telling everyone to get up."

"The house was burning bad by this time. All nine of us ran outside and jumped in the car and started riding down the road."

"We didn't know where we were going. We just wanted to get out of danger."

After they had been only a few blocks, Grace Ledford, 30, Mrs. White's son-in-law, said he thought a jet plane had crashed.

SAVED LITTLE

"We went back," Mrs. White said, "and saw the house blazing and the airplane sprawled across the back of the house. All I could save was three blankets and a quilt."

The two families went to the home of neighbor F. L. Thomas and drank coffee and talked about the tragic accident. Only Grace Ledford had his street clothes on. The rest were still in their pajamas and bathrobes.

"We didn't have a chance to save a thing," said Herbert White, 20. "I had \$137 in my pants pocket but I didn't even take time to get that. I was too busy trying to save my little brother, Tony."

Tony, 11, had been trapped beneath some heavy furniture. "I was stuck under there," he

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