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## NARRATIVE- History of the Flight-

A friend (Mr. Behan) rode his motorcycle down to Bourland Field (50F) where he parked it at the FBO office. He had followed me in my car down to that field, where he left his motorcycle and rode with me to our destination field (87TX) near Blum, Tx. On arrival there, he took an introductory flight with my CFI in an Autogyro MTO Sport, "a motorcycle on steroids".

After his ride with my CFI in the MTO Sport , ( I was doing some touch and goes in my Cavalon while he was in the MTO), the two of us took off around noon in my Autogyro Cavalon N 721E and flew direct to Godley, Tx., where I turned slightly off course from Bourland Field, to fly him on the east side of the racetrack at Cresson, TX, as on Saturdays the track usually has several cars on the circuit. He took some pictures out of the west (left passenger) side window as I slowed the gyro down to around 40 mph to give him more time to do so. We then turned northeast, flying up Hwy 377 toward Bourland Airport. Nearing the airport he asked if we could fly over his house which is located several miles north of Bourland Airport on Cattle Parc Dr., off Cattlebaron Road, to take pictures. I noted we had between half and a quarter tank of fuel and the weather was good, so we proceeded to his house. Our altitude was high enough that as we approached his house the ground had seemed relatively flat to me as it had been all the way up from Blum. We were paying more attention to locating the house off in the distance than the terrain we were currently flying over.

We arrived over my friend's house where I again slowed so he could take some pictures again out his window. We circled the house about three times before heading back south toward Bourland Field.

I assumed the terrain was flat to the south, as I had mistakenly observed when flying over to his house, so I headed in that direction. I saw the airspeed indicator was around 50 mph and thought to myself that was not a problem as we would just fly straight and level for a bit to pick up more speed before climbing back up higher to locate the airport.

It was almost immediately after leaving my friend's house that I noticed the trees on the ground under us rapidly getting closer at which time I checked the altimeter and vertical speed indicator which showed level flight. I did not understand what I was seeing out the side window as the trees continued to get closer and yet my vertical speed and altimeter showed level flight. I thought maybe something was wrong with the engine so I pulled the throttle back and shoved it full forward again and noted the manifold pressure was red lined

and still I was in level flight but now my airspeed was slowly starting to decay as I was trying to maintain my altitude above the trees. I was still heading south and trying to figure out what could possibly be wrong when I decided maybe the wind had shifted so I decided I would do a 180 turn and head back in the direction from which we came. As I was making a left turn we began to lose altitude and I saw we were going to hit some tree tops and not make a clearing just beyond, so I tried to put the cabin between two live oak trees figuring the rotors would take the hit and we would just drop to the ground. That is basically what I believe happened. We ended up in the back yard of Mr. Rod Smelley who told us we were two to three miles from the house on Cattle Parc Dr. ( Mr. Rod Smelley's address is

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Once we impacted the trees with the rotors, I think the aircraft stopped and dropped to the ground, bounced and landed on it's right side. My passenger was hanging above me, being in the left seat, with his seat belt intact. I turned off the switches and released his belt and told him to stand up and exit the aircraft through the missing left side door. Standing on me, he did so after which I got out and surveyed the scene. I still had no idea what had caused the crash.

The cabin and tail boom were intact at the base of the tree. The left side door was broken off and lying nearby in pieces. The horizontal stabilizer was broken off at the tail boom but still attached to the rudder. All three blades of the propeller were broken off about 12" from the hub. A 6' section of one of the rotor blades was broken off and bent in two, lying about 6 ft. in front of the cabin. The rotor mast was bent over but still attached to the rotor mast on one side just below the bolts attaching the rotor head assembly to the rotor mast. Both rotors were bent with the broken off rotor blade that was still attached as being the most damaged. The other rotor was only slightly bent over its full length. The right side gear leg was bent under the right side of the cabin. All pieces we could locate were within 20" of the site and no pieces were larger than a piece of the prop blade, except for the broken off rotor piece as previously described.