Jerzy Stanisław Rudlicki

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Jerzy Stanisław Rudlicki (born 14 March 1893, died 18 August 1977). He spent his childhood and youth in Odessa, displaying outstanding technical skills from his earliest years (he constructed and piloted gliders). He developed a prototype of an aircraft before he was 20 years old. He served as an airman during World War I.

In December 1917, Jerzy Rudlicki joined the ranks of the Polish I Corps and soon found himself in France with an assignment to the Polish Air Force. He returned to Poland in February 1919 and was appointed commander of the 16th Intelligence Squadron. He took part in the expedition to Kyiv as well as participated in the so-called Żeligowski's Mutiny. In 1921, he was referred to the prestigious École Supérieure d'Aéronautique, from which he graduated at the top of his class a year later. He served in the Polish Army until the end of 1925 as a member of the Polish Military Procurement Mission in France and the head of the experimental department at the Institute of Aviation Technical Research in Warsaw.

In 1927, Rudlicki joined the Lublin-based aviation manufacturing company Plage i Laśkiewicz and became its chief engineer. His achievements of this time include 11 aircraft prototypes (such as the Lublin R.VIII, R.X and R.XII reconnaissance airplanes and the R.IX torpedo bomber). He introduced an innovation – the first-ever retractable undercarriage in Poland — but his greatest achievement as an aeronautical engineer was the so-called butterfly or V-tail, also known as Rudlicki's V-tail.

After September 1939, he fled to France and then to England, where, from 1943, he worked for Lockheed. His greatest engineering achievement while being involved with Lockheed was developing the design of a bomb ejector (high

altitude bombing), used by the United States Army Air Force's Boeing B-17 strategic bombers. He left the US in mid-1945 and began to work for Republic Aviation, where he spent nearly two decades and was involved in projects such as designing an exhaust nozzle for vertical take-off jet engines.

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