

REPORT OF THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
on the
Investigation of an Accident Involving Aircraft
During a Ferry Flight

Irving Willard Marquis Graham was fatally injured in an accident which occurred near the Win-Field Airport, Fort Stockton, Texas, about 10:50 a.m. on August 3, 1943. Graham held a student pilot certificate but a record of his flying experience was not obtained as his log books could not be located. The aircraft, a Porterfield 35-70, NC 16494, owned by the pilot, was extensively damaged.

Graham accepted delivery of the seven-year old airplane which he had recently purchased but not previously flown, and took off from the Win-Field Airport about 10:48 a.m. The aircraft, in a very questionable flying condition after a previous accident, was being ferried to San Angelo, Texas for much needed repairs and overhaul. The take-off was started slightly back of the halfway point of the 4000-foot runway, and after settling to the ground twice during the take-off run, the plane was climbed in a nearly stalled attitude to an altitude of approximately 200 feet. It began settling at this point and the pilot started a nose-high turn back toward the field, during which the plane was stalled and fell off into a spin. It completed about three-quarters of a turn, then struck the ground on the left wing and nose.

Examination of the wreckage revealed no failure of any part of the aircraft prior to the accident and the manner in which the propeller was broken indicated that considerable power was being developed at the time of impact. The pilot's safety belt was found intact and unfastened. The field bordering the airport was covered with underbrush but a comparatively safe landing could have been effected straight ahead, had one been necessary.

Statements of witnesses, most of whom were well qualified because of their aviation experience, indicate that the pilot exhibited poor judgment and technique in handling the aircraft during the take-off and thereafter.

While the aircraft was obviously in an unairworthy condition, the probable cause of this accident was the poor judgment and flying technique of the pilot, which resulted in a stall and spin at low altitude.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs
Secretary