

Adopted: May 1, 1944

File No. 5155-43

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

Student Pilot William D. Williams was fatally injured when he fell from an aircraft approximately 1 mile southwest of Silver Lake Airport, Baker, California, about 3:55 p.m. on December 13, 1943. Williams, age 25, had received 3 hours and 40 minutes of dual instruction. His instructor, Charles Daniel Ozanich, held a commercial pilot certificate with single-engine land, 0-330 h.p., and flight instructor ratings. He had flown approximately 395 hours, about 108 of which were in the type airplane involved. The aircraft, a Fleet 7 DeLuxe, NC 780V, owned by Chaffrey Jr. College, was damaged to a minor extent.

Instructor Ozanich, in the front seat, and Student Williams doing the flying from the rear, took off from Silver Lake Airport at approximately 3:45 p.m. on a local instruction flight. When an altitude of about 3000 feet had been reached, the instructor called for a power-off, two-turn spin to the right. After two turns of a properly executed spin had been completed, the student applied excessive forward stick and full power, whereupon the aircraft entered a steep dive. The instructor brought the plane out of the dive and when he attempted to inform the student of his incorrect recovery procedure, he discovered that the student was not in the plane. The instructor circled the approximate location where the spin had been entered and observed the student's body on the ground with his parachute strung out along the ground. The instructor then returned to the airport and landed. Upon examination it was found that the student's safety belt was open and undamaged.

Examination of the parachute revealed that it had popped open due to the force of impact with the ground. The rip-cord had not been pulled. Some of the suspension lines were still in their retainers and there was no entanglement of the harness, suspension lines or canopy to indicate improper functioning. It appears that the student must have suffered sufficient shock or injury to cause him to be dazed or unconscious at the time he was thrown from the aircraft which would account for his not pulling the rip-cord of his parachute. As the instructor stated that the student's safety belt was fastened at the time of take-off, it is apparent that the student unfastened it, either intentionally or inadvertently, sometime during the flight.

While a contributing factor to the accident was the student's action in placing the aircraft in an abrupt power dive during recovery from a spin, the fact that his safety belt was unbuckled allowed him to be thrown from the plane.

BY THE BOARD

/s/ Fred A. Toombs
Secretary