

# ACCELERATING SENTIMENT

By William Hickman Pickens

**E**VEN though the amateur athletic officials have plastered a bounty on the sculp of the sports promoter, I still claim that there is no difference between professional and amateur sport so far as the public is concerned. The ultimate consumer must plunk his money on the line no matter if the sport be Simon-pure or not. Whether the arena be a college football stadium or a big-league ball park, there's a ticket for every seat and a price on every ticket. No matter how amateur the sport is, there is never an amateur gallery.

We will take the case of Suzanne Lenglen, who visited America twice, first as an amateur and second as a pro. It was the same Suzanne in both instances and the same pride of admission. The only difference was that she made her return tour under the benevolent wing of the famous Cash and Carry Pyle, a man who thinks that the laborer is worthy of his hire—and the higher the better. The idea of enticing the best-known sportswoman in the world away from her silver cups did not originate with Cash and Carry. The tip came from Damon Runyon one rainy February afternoon at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles. About this time the sporting world was bubbling and simm'ring over the match between Suzanne and Helen Wills at Cannes, France. It was attracting such interest that Runyon asked me why I didn't grab Suzanne and exhibit her in America. I wasn't much interested at first, but Runyon kept ribbing me up and finally convinced me that Suzanne would be a wow in our big cities. I told Runyon that I had a hook-up with C. C. Pyle and that it would be necessary to sell the idea to Cash and Carry before we could do anything. On his way East, Runyon dropped off at Chicago to rib up Pyle, who wired me to sail for France. I want to say here that ribbing up sport promoters is Runyon's hobby and that some of Ted Rickard's biggest fight cards have been suggested to Teddy Damon Runyon, who never profits a slim dime from any transaction, but does extract keen enjoyment in keeping the pot of sports at a boil.

## An Overproduction of Managers

**T**HE night before I took the tub for Europe I warned Pyle that it was a gamble, involving all the way up to \$15,000, a lot of valuable time, plenty of snappy Pickens diplomacy and no guaranty that I would be successful in inducing Suzanne to cough up an acceptance. Cash and Carry told me to go ahead and that the resulting front-page cable stories would be plenty of dividends for him. My trip was to be conducted in strict secrecy up to the time that Suzanne either signed on the polka-dotted line or threw the inkwell at me.

Two interviews I obtained in New York convinced me that there wasn't a chance of Lenglen coming back to America. Edward Moss, secretary of the United States Lawn Tennis Association, told me that he believed the U. S. L. T. A. would never sanction a professional promoter entering the consecrated ranks of tennis. Even if Lenglen did come over, she would be in the hands of the association from the time she skipped down the gangplank to the minute she waved good-by on her return journey.



The Lenglens, Suzanne, Her Father and Her Mother, Looking on While Helen Wills Has the Court

My old friend Georges Carpentier, who was in New York at the time, turned on the cold showers. Georges and Suzanne had been school chums in childhood and he knew her as a commuter knows his train. Georges assured me that if professionalism were an issue, she would never consent. Those two interviews amounted to zero. I didn't mind Moss so much, but I had wasted a good cigar on Georges.

Once aboard the lugger, I told the ship-news reporters that I was going over to smooth out a European tour for Red Grange and George Wilcat Wilson. I even showed them a Grange autographed football that Red had indorsed for the Prince of Wales which I was to slip the Prince the first time he invited me up to the family castle.

The first man I saw in Paris was Victor Breyer, editor of L'Echo des Sports, an acquaintance of bicycle-racing days. Breyer was sincerely shocked at my temerity in daring to suggest professionalism to Lenglen. I looked temerity up that night in my vest pocket dictionary. It meant gall, which made me a millionaire in the temerity business. I met many other French newspaper men and every one assured me that the prima donna of the racket would never accept rough American dollars. Every Frenchman I met claimed to be Suzanne's personal representative and each one refused his permission when I suggested that Suzanne come to America. Breyer told me that I was over on a hopeless task and the only way in which I could make expenses was to sign up some boxers and auto racers.

I finally decided to push all Suzanne's managers into strict quarantine and look for the lady myself. She was at Nice, on the French Riviera. I landed in that town on Easter Sunday and found she was to play on Easter Monday at Monte Carlo. I strolled up the Promenade Anglaise to mull things over, and after I got them thoroughly muddled, called at the Lenglens' hotel, the Negresco. The interpreter at the information desk of the Negresco informed me that the Lenglens were now living in a villa, but that he was thoroughly qualified to do business for Suzanne. I immediately took the air. A Paris edition of the Herald was the tip-off on the heavy increase in the French birth rate of managers. Pyle's picture was on the front page, with the startling announcement that Will H. Pickens was in France to sign up Suzanne, and for that purpose had \$200,000 in his kicks.

hopped into a limousine. That expensive gondola cheered me up, for only amateurs with large incomes can afford those cars. I ran for my rented car to chase Suzanne, but my newspaper friend told me that she had changed her plans and was off for a week-end trip in Italy with Lady Wavertree. Monday is a silly time to start a week-end, so I went back to the Lenglen villa to look up papa and ran plumb into Mamma Lenglen.

## The Manager of Suzanne

**N**O ONE has ever written about mamma. It was always Papa Lenglen this or Papa Lenglen that. She assured me that she was Suzanne's business manager. Mamma said that Suzanne would be back Friday and we could talk the musical language of the dollars on that day. The Lenglen villa was opposite the tennis courts, which have since been dismantled, as only Suzanne's playing made the Tennis Club profitable. On Friday I was received by Suzanne herself. She was dressed in negligee, reclining on a chaise longue and holding a Pomeranian in her arms. Mamma introduced us and Suzanne apologized for not rising. Her motor tour with Lady Wavertree had been very long and tiring. Then Suzanne gave mamma one of those eyebrow traffic signals and mamma left the room, being temporarily deposed from the position of manager. Suzanne was managing herself and I could see that she was no schoolgirl tennis star who could be salved with one of those what-you-owe-the-sport arguments.

I proceeded cautiously, never mentioned the idea of professionalism, but explained that when she was in America she had only seen New York and the tennis cliques of Long Island. She had never given the real American public an opportunity to judge her playing. Suzanne complained, in very excellent table English, that the land of the brave and the free was too brave in panning an invalid visitor and too free with its unjust criticisms. My best logic here was to change the subject, so I patted the Pomeranian and it snapped at me, evidently being one of Suzanne's many managers. When conversation again became cooperative, I impressed Suzanne with the statement that my associates were sagacious gentlemen who would never criticize her under any circumstances. If there

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I got the Lenglen villa on the telephone and Suzanne's papa answered. After talking for twenty minutes, he hung up on me. I then enlisted the support of the Associated Press correspondent, who advised me to deal with Suzanne direct.

Monte Carlo is only a suburban haul from Nice and I was in a grand-stand seat on Easter Monday when Suzanne played in an exhibition match. Her skill, grace and rhythmic movements on the court were amazing. I figured that she would be sure-fire in America and from that moment never permitted myself to nurse a doubt about her signing the books. The Associated Pressman told me that Suzanne would return to Nice following the game. I was to trail her car and grab an interview.

The last exhibition was at doubles and her side won. Hurdling the net, Suzanne rushed to the side lines and tossed her racket to an attendant, pulled a crimson sweater over her tennis costume and

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were any doubt about her reception in America, they would not be ready to risk a large sum of money in the enterprise.

First, I declared, every plan we had in mind embraced the absolute protection of her amateur standing. We were to star her in a motion picture which would be shown all over the world. Then we would syndicate her newspaper articles and accelerate the sales of her novel and the subsequent books she would write. We would also put her on the stage as the star of a musical comedy. I talked everything but professional tennis and smeared plenty of icing on the beautiful birthday cake I was baking up by offering her a substantial cash bonus, with an absolute guaranty of the entire amount to be named in the contract.

All this oratory was verbal shadow boxing. What I really wanted was some hint from her as to the amount of money necessary to interest her. It developed that the figure she had in mind was large. Shortly after the Armistice she had been approached by someone who had offered her \$200,000. That's a lot of money, folks, even when you say it fast. I spavined my fountain pen trying to figure all that dough out in francs. We chipped along for another hour and then I sent for a photographer to snap mamma, Suzanne and myself out in the garden. Suzanne autographed several copies of her book and many photographs. Then Mamma Lenglen invited me back into the villa, where she poured me out some 1847 Oporto. I drew up an optional agreement, Suzanne signed it and mamma celebrated the situation by giving me some more Oporto. I had interested Suzanne in an American tour. Her figure was \$200,000, but I knew that old Doc Pyle would slice that sum right down the back like a sinner's haddie.

I returned to the Negroes and started shooting cables under the Atlantic. Suzanne was worth \$100,000 for an American tour, but not in motion pictures or on the stage. She would have to do her stuff on the tennis court. In less than thirty minutes I got a telephone from the Lenglen villa. Suzanne must see me at once. I was not to do anything with the option paper she had signed until she saw me. She was coming over to the hotel and would meet me in the ladies' library.

**The Game of Business**

Accompanying the tennis queen was a young man.

"My manager," said Suzanne sweetly—"Major Charles Wilen."

The major was an American, and while he was telling me about himself, I was figuring out methods of easing this new managerial menace out of the picture.

Wilen showed great interest in the document signed by Suzanne and asked to see it right away. I was too old a promoter to be habes-corpused that way and I told him he could see a photographic copy the next day. The copy itself was in the dark room being multiplied. Suzanne excused herself and the major and I got right down to cases. He told me that he was pleased to meet me and that he was glad to deal with a man who spoke dollars and cents. He called Suzanne back and asked her to tell me that he had absolute authority to make deals for her. Suzanne corroborated this and left.

"Mr. Pickens," said the major, "I have planned to take Suzanne to America for a long time. There is a lot of money waiting for her over there and I am not going to allow you or Pyle to put anything over on her."

"Major," I replied, "neither Mr. Pyle nor myself is in the habit of putting anything over on anybody. We realize that Miss Lenglen would be a great attraction in the United States and we want her over there. Everything will be on the up-and-up. When we come to terms the money will be deposited in a weather-proof bank."

We conked back and forth like a couple of rival ticket scalpers and finally signed a tentative agreement which called for Cash and Carry to visit France in August and conclude financial arrangements. There was no doubt that the major was the real manager of Suzanne. I didn't mention outright professionalism to the major, but hinted that Suzanne's success in the movies would depend on the publicity acquired by plenty of tennis playing.

Following the French championships and the Wimbledon tournament, Cash and Carry came to Paris with his attorney, William Hayward, who is not only a lawyer but also has the Legion of Honor won in the World War. He is also a battling colonel, which delighted me, for a colonel is one up on a major at all times. After meeting Major Wilen in Paris, Pyle and Colonel Hayward tramped to Pourville, where the Lenglens were spending a month with an uncle—who belied such a close relationship by not claiming to be one of Suzanne's managers.

**Open Season on Amateurs**

Here is where Cash and Carry did some of his greatest manipulating. Lenglen's tour would be a financial bloomer if we had to thump around the bush and camouflage details of her activities in America. Her books, syndicated stories, stage appearances and other methods of compounding financial interest might flatten out. But should Suzanne, the perennial amateur, blossom out as a good square twelve-by-twelve professional, the tour would be a success, and Pyle, Suzanne and myself would all own tickets on the gravy train.

So Pyle spilled his smoothest line of conversational oil. He was ably seconded by Colonel Hayward, whose Legion of Honor ribbon was not without effect on the Lenglen jury, consisting of father, mother and daughter. Even uncle sat in as an alternate delegate and kept a keen eye on Suzanne's eyebrows, which she manipulated to control the situation as a chairman uses a gavel.

Pyle caucused the convention from time to time, but for some reason Mamma Lenglen did not choose that Suzanne should turn pro. She was finally won over and so many signatures were signed to the contract that it looked like a petition.

The next morning sports writers and tennis officials were unapologetically astonished by the cabled news that Lenglen had turned professional and would tour America under Cash and Carry's indorsement. After the cables were verified by Suzanne, there came a shower of articles saying that she could come over, but that she would go right back. There was no one in the United States to play unless Pyle intended to teach me the game.

That Mr. Pyle is deeper than a wildcat oil well. He allowed the officials and sports writers to nibble this negative bait until it was all chewed up. He had plenty of announcements to make, but he was milking one cow at a time. The uproar over Suzanne's signature lasted until we got back to America, and then Cash and Carry bombed conservative dugouts with the statement that Lenglen had somebody to play in America—and that somebody was Mary K. Browne!

But where were Mary and Suzanne to play? That was the next question propounded by the mournful glee club. When Greek meets Greek, the tug of war is all the fiercer if one of the Greeks is an ask-me-another boy and the other belongs to Now-I'll-Tell-You-One Lodge 463. Pyle told them one, for by this time I was hustling around America, Canada and Cuba, leasing auditoriums, coliseums, arenas, car barns and any other buildings that had roofs and entrances.

Cash and Carry beat them to the next question by displaying a huge indoor

tennis court. This cost \$10,000 and was made of cork, rubber and canvas. It provided a uniform court on which the players could scamper every scheduled evening of the tour.

There was still another query. Who would care enough to see Susie and Mary play? And the ones who would care about the contests—would they care enough to pay? This was one question the professional worriers shared with Pyle. But Cash and Carry was like the darky crossing the river. He had waded so far that he was swimming and it was too late to turn back. Suzanne arrived on the Paris at this time and her arrival was ballyhooed beautifully. Cash and Carry tossed a couple more big chips into the jack pot by announcing that he had signed Howard Kinsey and Harvey Snodgrass.

By this time, even Lindbergh could not have been photographed unless he held a tennis racket in his hand. Paul Feret, prominent French player, tripped over the dotted line, and amateur tennis sorrowfully turned three more pictures toward the wall.

But there was another shock left in the Pyle batteries. He still required a male tennis star of the first rank, and opened up group negotiations by wire, telephone and personal representatives with the big-timers.

Three days after Lenglen's arrival on the Paris, Pyle gave Suzanne a dinner on that boat. It was attended by newspaper men and noted sportsmen from Canada and the United States. The food was fine, and the dessert consisted of the news that Pyle had captured Vincent Richards.

Vince and his wife got a great reception when they walked down the main staircase after a dramatic introduction by Big Bill Edwards. All the performers were now signed up and we were ready to move out on the main line. Richards' decision to become a salaried employe really rattled the crockery in exclusive pantries.

The tour opened in Madison Square Garden on October 9, 1926. Prices ranged from two to five dollars. Suzanne was making her first appearance in America since that melancholy day at Forest Hills when she walked off the lot. She was back in a country which she felt to be not too friendly; she was a professional, and therefore entitled to none of the neutral consideration which is an amateur's birthright.

**The Main Attraction**

The entire tour hinged on the reception tendered to Suzanne that evening in Madison Square Garden. Even though I am a man who allows his finger nails to grow long when there is a dollar to be picked up, I really felt sorry for the French girl when I rapped on the door of her dressing room and told her to hustle. The crowd was waiting for the tennis business to start. Lenglen was very nervous and had an imported cry before appearing. Then she braced up and marched out under the mammoth arc lights like the daughter of the regiment, while the band ripped off the Marseillaise and the crowd whooped in the affirmative.

Suzanne had arrived. I don't know whether it was Suzanne, the Marseillaise—which tune is thrilling enough to make a phantom do the Charleston in a haunted house—or whether it was C. C. Pyle, who lifted the gypsy curse off the old castle. I rather think it was Pyle's ballyhooing.

Lenglen hadn't been playing a minute with Mary K. Browne before her status in America was declaring dividends. She amazed the spectators by her brilliant playing. The critics were fair and heaped her with praise. However, you wouldn't have had a doubt as to the reception waiting for Lenglen that evening if I had started by telling you that the gate was \$34,000. People do not pay that kind of money to come inside and hoot.

Then followed a snappy tour of thirty-nine other cities in the States, Canada and Cuba. Suzanne's popularity continued to blossom and throw off sparks. Here are the vital statistics in some of the towns we made on the tour:

Chicago, \$19,000; Cleveland, \$13,000; Boston, \$16,000; Montreal, \$15,000; Toronto, \$14,000; San Francisco, \$14,500; Los Angeles, \$22,000. Many of the other towns assayed more than \$10,000 for one night's gleaming, proving that the people did not come to view professional tennis, but did come to see Lenglen. The ballyhoo standard established in New York was never allowed to simmer down to a dimming lullaby. We kept pounding the dishpans, sounding the cymbals and doing everything essential to annoy the welkin. Advance men went ahead of the special train to stir up the publicity.

**A Famous Partner**

An expert tennis writer made the grand tour with Lenglen. There was a woman fashion writer on the train. There were also star feature men and a battery of photographers. I am proud of our efforts in the portrait line. After we got through posing Suzanne, art editors fought for close-ups and fashion magazines demanded full pages of her in Paris gowns and sport suits.

Sports writers along the route were amazed at the gracious manner in which she received them after an all-day ride in a Pullman. There was no spoiled darling about Suzanne, and although Cash and Carry claims credit, I think that her attitude was due to the fact that she was a genuine professional and therefore free of the involved bookkeeping and financial worries of an amateur. Each week she received her money and she didn't have to hide it. She had also rid herself of a thousand managers. Pyle was her manager now, and Pickens was his prophet.

Only after playing in thirty-five cities did she miss a scheduled engagement. After returning from Havana, she got a severe attack of tonsillitis. This caused a shuffling of five dates, which were later played.

This tour was spangled with the usual twenty-four-sheets and other strong billing. As in the case of Nurmi, we had to educate the public up to Lenglen, who is now a very rich girl.

We old-times sports promoters were thankful if newspapers were generous enough to run items concerning our stars, for daily publicity was the life of our game. But Cash and Carry was of the new school, which figured that if a thing was good enough to print it was good enough to pay for. He has made a science of promoting and leaves nothing to chance. The old glamour has departed from ballyhooing, for in the old days of hit-and-run we old-timers never knew whether we were going to lunch with the mayor or have dinner with the jailer.

My promoting days started early in life in Birmingham, Alabama, when I went into partnership with another young fellow whom I considered almost my equal as a genius. The lad's name was Thomas Edison. He had just invented a cast-iron machine with a human voice. If you had been in Alabama in the late '80's you would have seen Will H. Pickens standing in front of one of these machines with a leather bag slung over his shoulder. He opened the back of this iron monster with a key and milked the interior of five-cent pieces, frowning every few seconds as he tossed a worthless lead slug into the gutter.

Having separated the nickel alloy from the pure unadulterated lead, he snapped his leather bag, carefully changed the precious cylinder records and went moodily on his way. For the accumulated nickels did not belong to Will Pickens. All he received for his labor was four dollars a week and all the

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lead plugs he could collect. One day I decided that a nickel in Alabama was anybody's property, and gathering my four dollars together I hired an iron monster from a phonograph company in the South for three spinners—a spinner being the robust outdoor word for dollar. The extra spinner was held back for promotional purposes.

The busiest corner in Birmingham was my area of conquest. Until Will Pickens started operations, the busiest day experienced at that corner was when the elephant stepped out of the circus parade and sat down to think things over. The three spinners merely leased the talking apparatus for twenty-four hours. I had to make good in a day or go back to work. I soon informed Birmingham that Professors Will Pickens and Tom Edison were ready to present all the latest songs, both comic and sentimental, through the medium of the iron machine with the human voice. I spent my fourth and last spinner for a huge sign which explained that Professor Edison was the inventor of the electric light. Professor Pickens needed no introduction. He was a home-town product making good.

**A Degree for Thomas Edison**

That old mechanism played a good many tunes. Outside of Sousa's Band, another performer I remember who featured the program was Dan W. Quinn, singing Molly, and I, and the Baby. The machine played nothing but cylindrical records. These slid over a tube-like arrangement set in motion by power derived from electricity generated in huge wet-cell batteries. Instead of the usual broadcasting horn which features the phonograph and radio today, the old machines were equipped with five ear tubes and all concerts were strictly private. My first day's business took me off the nut.

"The nut" is another circus expression, meaning overhead expenses. It is derived through a logical sequence of reasoning. The old-time carnivals, which are now tahoo in many towns, carried along in their wake a riffraff of sharpers, grifters and other doubtful lads. The carnival wagons travel with their sides firmly held in place by bolts and nuts. Even in the old days many towns were hostile to carnivals and itinerant side shows, and it became necessary to send a man ahead of each show to buy off law officers who were willing to submit to reason. This money was known as grease. After the authorities were greased, it was possible to roll into town, unscrew the nuts holding up the sides of the wagons and start to trim the yokels. The amount of grease paid out to officials became known as nut money. In other words, this graft had to be paid before the carnival owner could take off a nut. You would be surprised at the number of big business men who use this term as a short substitute for overhead expenses.

My one machine was successful until some Birmingham crape hanger discovered that Professor Edison's talking automaton was destroying the delicate thimbolobis inside the human ear. I counteracted this propaganda by getting a prominent doctor to write a testimonial stating that the iron

machine with the human voice would cure deafness, stuttering and falling of the arches. Its musical stimulus coupled with the gentle vibrations set up by the electric batteries acted as a massage on the tympanic membrane, thereby clearing lip auditory afflictions. I made my first twenty-four-sheet of this testimonial and promoted Professors Edison and Pickens by adding an M.D. to their titles.

Professor Edison rewarded my incognito endeavors in his behalf by inventing a fourteen-tube machine which would collect seventy cents at a clip. This latest appliance stimulated business and I was soon able to announce a concert tour through Fayette, Shelby, Blount and Jefferson counties, featuring the cast-iron singer and its fourteen tubes at five cents a tube. Towns clamored for bookings, and Pickens and Edison became famous—in the order named.

High-school sororities, ladies' clubs, the Alabama Odd Fellows and other organizations spent jolly evenings grouped around the iron entertainer with tubes held solemnly in their ears. It was a mysterious way of torturing an evening without actually killing it, for no one without a tube in his ear could hear a thing. I had a good list of songs, but the most popular was May Irwin's famous New Orleans colored bull song, When I Walk That Levee Round.

Then Professor Edison swamped his junior and unknown partner by perfecting the horn and doing away with the rubber appendages and the ear nips. Phonograph music became public property and some vision-intoxicated prophet predicted that some day there would be a phonograph in every home. I went out of business, figuring among my total losses a sea-green Prince Albert coat and a high hat which I had worn only through three mild Southern winters. I was forced to drop the "Professor" from my name, but got some revenge by revoking Edison's medical degree.

By this time I had an incurable taste for profiting by other men's efforts, and authorities on fungus and barnacles could classify me as a promoter. When roller skates became popular I ran rinks. When bicycles sped by the roller skates, I promoted the first bike races in Alabama. The first bike sprinter I managed was the man who trimmed me in a match race. I became his promoter because I was determined to beat him some way.

**The Box-Office Value of Bandages**

When they reduced the size of the front wheel of the bicycle and that popular vehicle became known as a safety, I looked around for something more dangerous to other people. Barney Oldfield sprang to the front while the motor car was still a dreaded juggernaut, and the two of us cheerfully capitalized sudden death while our screaming twenty-four-sheets joyfully hypotheated disaster. Barney's vogue was built up on the romance of freshly healed accidents and the lure of catastrophes yet to happen. In my opinion he was the greatest driver who ever skidded a turn, and he made his rep in the days when the tool box was bigger than the engine.

Oldfield's great box-office value lay in his utter disregard of danger. He had no more nerves than a sawdust doll. I used

to ballyhoo his Green Dragon as roaring around the track, but it actually wheezed. It was in September, 1904, at the Fair Grounds in St. Louis, that Barney, blinded by dust, swerved through the track railing and killed two men hired to police an outer fence two furlongs distant. Barney's injuries were almost fatal, but when he recovered he was a national figure. A year later Barney banged into the fence around the Grosse Pointe track in Detroit. His scalp was badly lacerated by the rough-lumber shampoo, and the doctor wound so much gauze around his skull that Barney looked like a Hindu prince. Racing dates were so close together in those days that he was compelled to wear the bandages in the next five cities. I was sorry that he ever took them off, for the showmanship was good for an extra 10,000 attendance in every town we played.

In 1909, during one of Barney's retirements, I got together the greatest racing team ever assembled with the object of ballyhooing a certain motor car. My crew consisted of Lewis Strang, Bob Burman, Louis Chevrolet and George DeWitt. Later I added Arthet Chevrolet, Ray Harroun and Jimmy Ryall. My job was to promote cities and states into encouraging road and track races for a new brand of cars.

Although the war interrupted automobile racing for several years, it is still a considerable sport in the Middle West. Indianapolis claims crowds running up to 200,000 for its Decoration Day meet and hangs up liberal prizes. Provided that the winner of the race has been well up in front during the contest, he can draw down around \$40,000 for first place and lap money. There is another \$60,000 distributed to the other drivers. Tommy Milton is the only driver who ever won two of these Decoration Day races. It is a racking test of 500 miles on a brick speedway.

**A Free Show and No Audience**

There is no more money in promoting airplane exhibitions. Just last summer I stood outside of San Diego and saw 200 army and navy planes swooping and tumbling in the air like tame pigeons. It was a free show, but few citizens were there to waste a glance on it. It made me hark back fifteen years, when Lincoln Beachey was in his prime and my pockets were the granaries for a weekly harvest of round dollars. Now people wouldn't pay a split dime to see an elephant go aloft in a paper bag. The Government has a monopoly on the exhibition game and I weep when I see the silver-coated Los Angeles floating in the skies without the aid of my accelerating twenty-four-sheets.

However, it was all in fun, and I made many sincere attachments during my early career, the sincerest of those attachments being furnished in many cases by the county sheriff. And although the most lasting of my friendships was and is with Barney Oldfield, the dare-devil I think of oftenest is Lincoln Beachey as he flew upside down over San Francisco Bay with his wings closing, one by one, like the shutters on a village store at twilight.

And when both those shutters were folded, Lincoln had closed his shop.

Editor's Note—This is the sixth and last of a series of articles by Mr. Pickens.

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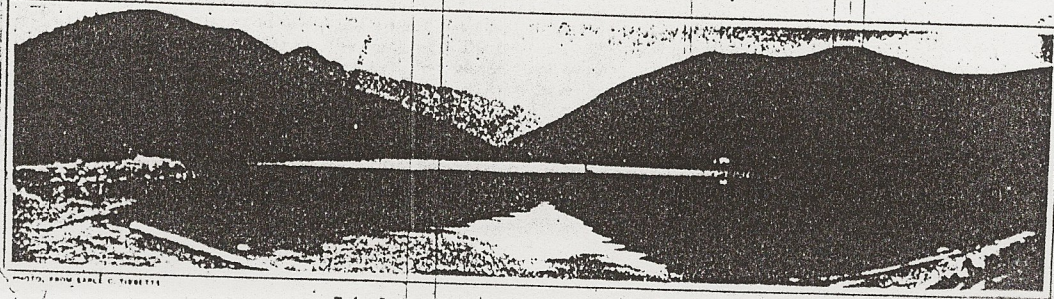
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**"I Don't Care"**

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