

ACCELERATING SENTIMENT

By William Hickman Pickens

I didn't get thinking seriously of aviation, though, until I went to college. I've only been flying five years. The first time I ever saw anyone fly was in Washington, when I saw Lincoln Beachey fly. I was about eight years old. It made quite an impression on me.

COL. CHARLES LINDBERGH, in the Los Angeles Examiner, June 20, 1927.

WHEN I took Lincoln Beachey to Washington in 1914 it was not with the idea of impressing young Lindy or any other eight-year-old boy. I was trying to impress some of the eighty-year-old boys

He was good, but as a promoter it was my business to make people think he was better and to keep him in the limelight. The free flying exhibition at Washington was the result of my publicity campaign to keep Beachey on the front pages. The government aviation flyers were game at that time, but the equipment was antiquated and there were not enough planes to go round. Every time an army flyer crashed I would hustle to the nearest press association with a long diatribe against the parsimonious policy of the House and Senate.

For three years we bombarded newspapers with these criticisms.

Finally I was challenged by Walter Howey, city editor of the Chicago Tribune. He wanted to know, if Beachey was so good, why he didn't go down to Washington and show Congress how to fly. I told Howey I would be delighted if he could arrange it, but that Congress was sore at us because of Beachey's continued criticisms.

signed by Beachey, who offered to explain the mistakes of the Government and convince Congress of the wrong it was working on brave soldiers by compelling them to fly in rotten hulks.

On Tuesday, November 25, 1913, the San Diego Sun obligingly gave us this four-column spread on its front page:

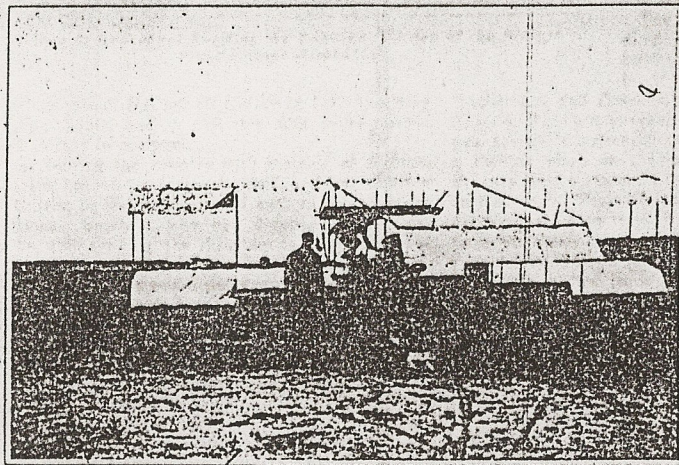
Government airmen must be protected. The time has arrived when the nation can no longer endure the shame of sending its army aviators to death in rotten hulks called airships. Lincoln Beachey, spectacular birdman, whose charge, as printed in yesterday's Sun, that the United States Government was literally guilty of the slaughter of its soldier aviators created a sensation throughout the civilized world, stood firm in his position today. Duty is calling Lincoln Beachey. He feels that he can no longer sit silent and see brother birdmen mangled to death because of the parsimony of Congress. Perhaps Congress does not understand. But he hopes to make them see things as they are and to set aside a sum for aviation which will prevent many such accidents as that of yesterday. He hopes to make them see that the United States should no longer be the laughing-stock of the universe.

Little Business and Small Profit

YOU may consider that I took advantage of cheap advertising at the expense of other people's misfortunes, but every dollar used in the intelligent development of the airplane in America was being earned through exhibition flying. Although the Wright brothers were the first to fly, they got no subsidy from the Government and were forced to go to France for recognition. On their return they provided the money to cover the huge deficits of their manufacturing plant by employing aviators to give exhibition flights in 1910, 1911 and 1912. Sometimes they sold a few machines to the Government, but they lost money on these sales.

Curtiss was up against the same problem. Backed by Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, he built a plane at Hammondsport, New York, and entered it in the Gordon Bennett Cup Race in Europe.

Just a year before this, in 1908, Curtiss had attracted attention by developing a very light eight-cylinder motor which he used on a motorcycle to break a speed record on the beach at Daytona, Florida. He put this same engine in his airplane and whipped the cream of Europe's flyers in 1909.



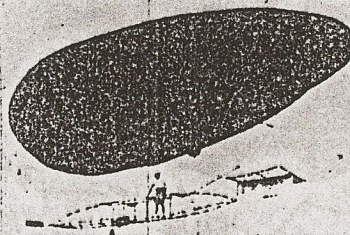
Louis Paulhan About to Take Off in His Farman Plane at Jamaica, Long Island

in Congress with America's necessity for aerial preparedness. At least, I wanted Congress to accept that view of the situation, for my real motive was to work up a ballyhoo for Beachey and increase his box-office value at the numerous pumpkin and state fairs throughout the country. Lindy can consider himself fortunate, for that was the only free show I ever put on in thirty-five years of sport promotion.

At that time the house of Will H. Pickens boasted of an aviation fleet bigger than the United States Aviation Corps. I was the general commander of fifty-four airplanes and the admiral of six flying boats. This flotilla was distributed from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf. I had retired from the Zeppelin field in 1910, at which time my quartet of dirigibles were serving as Christmas ornaments on church steeples in widely distributed sections of America.

The Days of Bamboo and Linen

MY SIXTY intrepid aviators also did their share of bouncing off roofs and tangling up with town-hall towers, for aviation was a deadly and venomous pastime in those years. Which didn't faze me a whit, for I was known as the gamest and bravest exponent of dangerous feats—by other men. I was always willing to risk a generous dollar provided the other man would chance his neck. The most daring of my sixty aviators was Beachey, who was good for \$1000 to \$6000 for every flight he made at a rural squash carnival. He was America's greatest flying attraction, and when he zoomed aloft in a Curtiss plane, constructed of bamboo and linen fabric, he caused the farmers' necks to bend back like reeds in a tempest and also made whiskers grow straight up into the air.

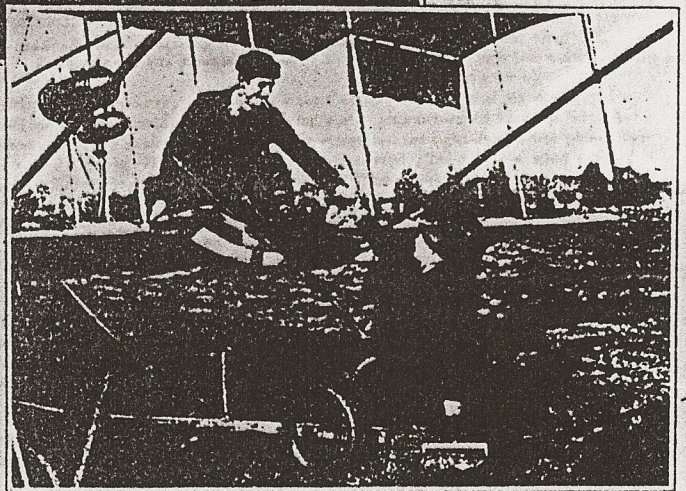


ROY KNABENSHUS AND HIS PRIMITIVE DIRIGIBLE

The blow-off came in San Diego in November, 1913. On the very day that two army flyers were killed in a government machine, Lincoln Beachey startled America by looping the loop for the first time in this country.

He saw the army flyers crash in the morning on North Island, on the outer rim of San Diego Bay, and looped the loop the same afternoon.

I gave out an interview in which Beachey demanded a Federal investigation, and sent telegrams to Secretary of War Garrison and Secretary of the Navy Daniels,



PHOTO, COPYRIGHT BY BROSSE BROTHERS

Louis Paulhan and His Farman Biplane, 1910

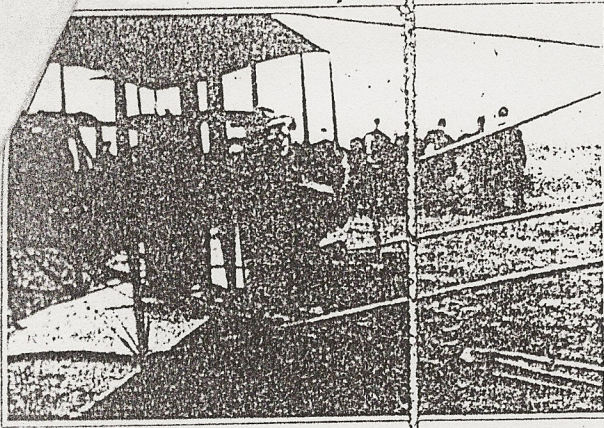


PHOTO FROM KEYSTONE VIEW COMPANY, INC., N. Y.
A Picture of Bud Mars Showing the Exposed Position of the Pilot in Pre-Fuselage Airplanes

Beachey earned \$65,000 for Curtiss in 1911 by giving exhibition flights, and it was this sum which helped Curtiss to stay in business.

I was touring the country with a string of automobile racers, headed by Barney Oldfield, and joined forces with Curtiss in the promotion of auto races and flying exhibitions. Beachey, who had dropped out of sight after he quit running the dirigibles in the summer of 1910, suddenly blossomed out as the pioneer spectacular airman. All that was demanded of other flyers was that they stay in the air for five minutes.

Beachey soon got tired of skimming the tops of houses and amazed the world with spirals and banks. When I say he was running the dirigibles I mean it literally. The dirigibles of those days were about forty feet long and their envelopes contained 20,000 cubic feet of hydrogen gas. They looked like cigars—and lasted about as long. There was a lift of only eighty pounds to every 1000 feet of hydrogen and this compelled us to construct the under-carriage of bamboo.

Walking the Plank

THIS bamboo work was in the form of a steamer gangplank with a railing on either side. The motive power was furnished by an ordinary motorcycle engine situated in the center of the gangplank.

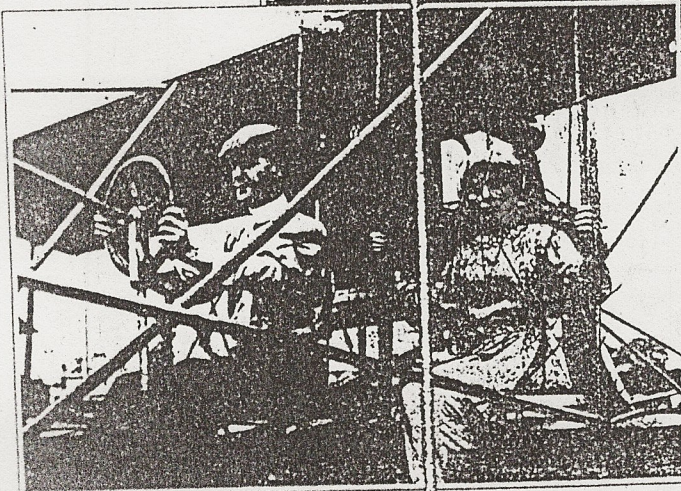


PHOTO FROM KEYSTONE VIEW COMPANY, INC., N. Y.
Bud Mars, a Pioneer, and His Wife in an Early Curtiss Biplane

Bombay was the sole occupant of the dirigible, being engineer, crew, navigator and captain. He could not help being at least a captain, because that title was conferred on any man the minute he put a foot in a blimp basket. Beachey controlled the antics of his dirigible by his activities on the thirty-foot gangplank. When he wanted to fly on the level he stayed in the center, hugging the engine. When he wanted to go up he ran backward on the gangplank, and when he desired to come down to earth he scooted forward until his weight caused the nose of the dirigible to droop. He weighed only 135 pounds, but couldn't shake a toe without causing his oiled-silk hippo to respond with a wiggle and a shiver.

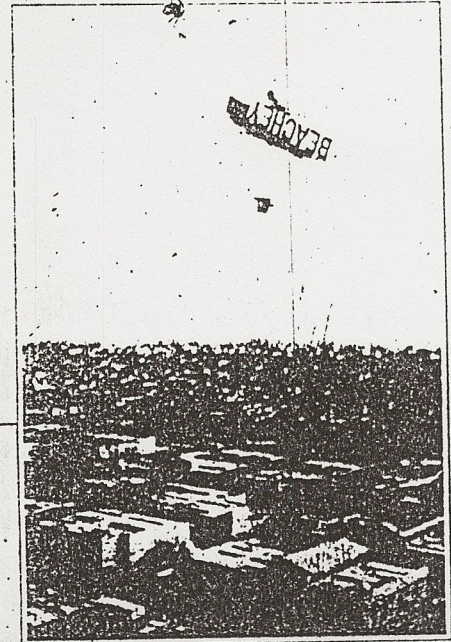
The first sensational flight of a dirigible was credited to Roy Knabenshue at the St. Louis Exposition in 1904. I arranged a race between

Knabenshue and Beachey in 1910 to take place in Los Angeles. The meet was promoted by Dick Ferris, who had paid \$50,000 to a Frenchman named Louis Paulhan to fly a Farman plane on the same day. Knabenshue and Beachey were accustomed to being the stellar attraction on field days. They were working in their improvised canvas hangars on tune-up day which preceded exhibitions, when they heard a terrific roaring in the sky. They rushed out and saw a giant plane in the air. Paulhan was flying with the first passenger ever carried in America.

Beachey turned and said, "Roy, our racket is dead."

having become world famous in twelve months. During that time he had established an American altitude record by ascending 11,000 feet. He had pulverized Chicago with his spirals, perpendicular drops and loops. He dived through the spray on the lip of Niagara, winged his way beneath the arches of the steel bridge and continued down the gorge to the whirlpool, thereby laying the three terrible aviation ghosts of down trends, air pockets and vortexes.

Up to that time no exhibition flyer would go aloft in a breeze. Tests of the wind were made by holding a drooping handkerchief between the thumb and index finger. If the air caused the hanky to vibrate the teeniest-weeniest bit the nervous aviator would dash back into his tent and I would lose the gate money. One of our flyers, Bud Mars, could kick up a sixty-mile gale on the calmest day by



PHOTOGRAPH BY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE
Lincoln Beachey Breaking the Loop-the-Loop Record Over the Panama-Pacific Exposition, San Francisco, 1915. Picture Taken From a Flying Boat by E. Carl Wallen

blowing on the hanky from the side of his mouth. Any time we had a difficult flying contract we would send Bud out to save the committee. Bud could hold the hanky in his hand, talk to the committee from one side of his mouth and blow the hanky with the other. He never flew unless he felt like it. The committee would leave, perfectly satisfied that they had lived through the worst tornado that ever blew.

Lincoln Beachey in the Airship He Flew Before He Encountered His First Airplane

Paulhan, of course, eclipsed the dirigibles during the meet. Beachey stayed with the dirigible long enough to fill some fair engagements and then entered the Curtiss aviation school as a student. He smashed up three of the best Curtiss planes and Glenn tried to get rid of him, as he was convinced that he would never make a flyer. But Paulhan's exhibition had inspired Beachey in the same way that Beachey's flight thrilled the eight-year-old Lindbergh. He came back to Los Angeles inside of a year, under my direction,

Mars flew the Curtiss pusher type of plane, engined with a four-cylinder motor guaranteed to kick up forty horse power in all directions but the right one. These planes were notoriously underpowered. They had a wing spread of twenty-eight feet. The struts were of laminated wood. The tail was made of cloth stretched over wood and hooked to the body of the machine by four bamboo poles. There was no such thing as a fuselage.

A Motor-Driven Rocking-Chair

THE flyer sat out in front of his machine on a bicycle seat, pushing the wheel backward and forward to work the elevators, turning the wheel to manipulate the rudder and moving his body right or left to stabilize the machine. The engine was back of him and slightly overhead.

The picture of those early flying coffins can be visualized today by placing an electric fan on a wicker porch chair. In fact, I'll bet you can get more power out of the wicker chair

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ver forgave an injury. The only reason John Israel was alive was because Mr. Armit's rifle missed fire a time or two.

Thomas Armit indistinctly saw familiar faces in the throng about him; he saw Gen. John Woods and Judge Addison, Senator Ross and Major Craig and Gabriel Dubac, the Frenchman. They were Federalists, favorable to Captain Stenles; but there were Republicans as well—Doctor Scott and Thomas Baird and James McClurg. They had joined in the huzza. General Fowler stood shoulder to shoulder with Tarleton Bates. A storm of satirical queries assailed John Israel: Hadn't he better close his printing office and leave Pittsburgh? How long, with Mr. Armit gunning for him, could he hope to live? Would he meet the old man in an encounter?

Bates stepped forward. He raised his hand for silence. "I have an announcement and a request to make to Mr. Israel," he proceeded. "Lately there have been in the Tree of Liberty certain unflattering references to Captain Mathias Stenles, at present running for prothonotary in this city. Captain Stenles deserves better even from his opponents. Captain Stenles fought for America, for us, for Pittsburgh, in the sanguinary war against England. He was wounded and suffered for the cause of liberty. Captain Stenles is a man of honor; he is now returning

from Cincinnati; and when he does return he will demand personal satisfaction from Mr. Israel. Captain Stenles is a lion in spirit but wasted in body, and a number of gentlemen have joined me in the resolution to prevent him from engaging in a duel. Mr. Israel, if the present attacks on Captain Stenles continue in the Tree of Liberty we will insist on meeting them in a body. We will insist upon Captain Stenles not acting. I may add that some of your most distinguished political supporters are in agreement with me."

John Israel was amazed. He had nothing personally against Captain Mathias Stenles, a gentleman of the highest reputation. He had merely written in the interest of the party. Mr. Tarleton Bates well knew that political controversies often took on an appearance of bitterness which had no base in actuality. The Federalists could not possibly elect their candidates and he would be delighted to accord Captain Stenles the fullest expression of his opinion of him, as an individual and a citizen. There was a fresh and louder huzza. James McClurg took the place of Tarleton Bates. He wanted, he said, to emphasize all that Mr. Bates had expressed. The Republican Party honored the men who had had a part in the great struggle for America and freedom.

Thomas Armit didn't hear him. He was dead.

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than Beachey or Mars got out of their machines. The position of the engine was responsible for the high mortality in crashes. The motor always fell on top of the aviator.

It was in this type of machine that Beachey gave his exhibitions, and I still shiver when I think of him flying through the air in that flimsy contraption, resembling nothing quite so much as a monkey clinging to a zooming trellis. Every stunt he accomplished added a new item to the science of aviation, even though that stunt was for the edification of the wheat bidders, gazing skyward from the state and county fairs, which were early aviation's proving grounds. Instead of Beachey's stunts being encouraged by Curtiss and other deans of flying, he was severely criticized and threatened with ostracism by the clubs promoting air tournaments. They called him a flying fool and aerial maniac, who was bringing ridicule to the sport of aviation. There is no doubt that dozens of gamblers were killed trying to emulate Beachey's hazardous feats, and Curtiss absolutely refused to build a machine in which Beachey could loop the loop.

The first loop the loop accomplished in public was made by the Frenchman, Pegoud, at Issy, France. But there is no doubt that the idea germinated in Beachey's brain. In fact, I had advertised him in 1912 as looping the loop at a height of 5000 feet. The reason why I sent him up to that distance was because his loop was nothing more than a vertical bank in a 100-foot circle. It was a loop all right, but it was a ring-around-a-rosy affair and not an up-and-over somersault. However, you can get away with a lot of stuff when you are 5000 feet in the air.

Beachey knew that he could loop the loop but didn't want to try it in a bamboo

cage that was little stronger than a borrowed umbrella. He gave out interviews for two years, stating that his next great feat would be the loop, but Curtiss refused to construct a more powerful machine in spite of Beachey's pleadings. Having been deprived of his prospective thrill, Beachey got disgusted, quit flying and entered the real-estate business in his home town of San Francisco in the winter of 1912.

When news was flashed that Pegoud had looped on September 13, 1913, using a rotary Gnome motor, it was a great blow to Beachey. Both Curtiss and Wright claimed that Pegoud's loop was nothing more than an optical illusion and that Pegoud had merely accomplished Beachey's vertical bank. But Beachey knew that it had been done and wired me to meet him at Hammondsport, where we arranged with Curtiss immediately to construct a plane from designs that Beachey had submitted two years before. The engine was a V-shaped, eight-cylinder aviation motor, no rotary Gnome of the type used by Pegoud being available in this country.

Curtiss built the machine under protest, claiming that the upright motor would stop at the apex of the loop and that Beachey would finish the loop in a hearse. Beachey pinned his faith to his theory that centrifugal force would carry him up and over and that the engine would resume operations on the downward arc.

While Beachey was landing after his first flight with the new machine, which was a biplane with a wing spread of twenty feet, he miscalculated the speed of the midgecraft and swept over the roof of a canvas army hangar. There were two lieutenants of the air service and two sisters perched on the ridgepole of the hangar watching Beachey's first flight in ten months. The

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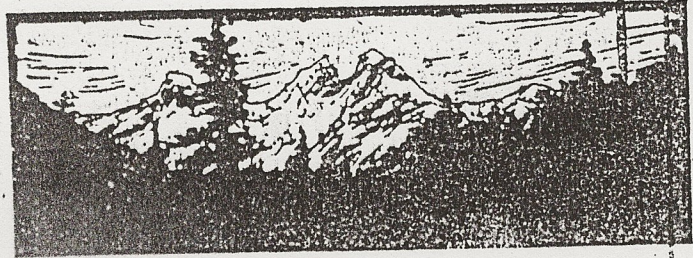
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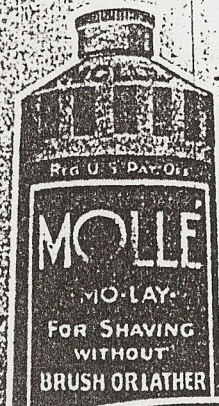
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lieutenants leaped, but the sisters were struck by the wings and one was killed. It was the first time in his career that he had ever injured a spectator. He stepped out of the machine and retired from aviation for the second time.

That faced me with a loss of \$10,000, for I had such faith in Beachey's loop that I had ordered that amount of lurid twenty-four-sheet posters. A twenty-four-sheet is an immense advertising sign just two dozen times the size of an ordinary lithograph. As it was winter, I had intended starting Beachey off in San Diego, and that town was plastered with circus posters informing San Diego that Beachey would fly upside down on Thanksgiving Day, 1913. Even the tickets were selling in advance.

A New Stunt

I had a hook-up with the Al Bahr Temple Shriners and it was under their auspices that Beachey was going to fly. Beachey mooned around Hammondsport for a week and I made no attempt to persuade him to reconsider his decision to retire. But one morning when he opened his eyes the first thing he saw was a twenty-four-sheet plastered on the side wall of his bedroom. The poster depicted him flying upside down—a thing he had not yet accomplished. The next day we were on our way to San Diego with the new airplane crated away in the baggage car.

Beachey made his first trial loop the same day that he saw the two army lads crash. Then I sent the telegrams to Garrison and Daniels, and the House of Pickens was back in business.

The telegrams drew sparks. Beachey came to me the next evening holding two telegraphed responses in his hand. The replies invited him to come to Washington and show Congress how the Government should be run. He couldn't understand the telegrams, because he knew nothing of the wires I had sent to Garrison and Daniels.



Mr. and Mrs. Knabenshue

When I told him that he was going to Washington, Beachey retired from aviation for not only the third time but for all time. I talked him out of that and he was in Washington in a short time, spending four hours with Garrison and as much time with Daniels.

Once again the name of Beachey crashed the front pages of every newspaper in America. He called attention to the fact that while France had spent \$7,000,000 on aviation in 1912, the United States had expended a miserable \$125,000.

I immediately rushed Beachey out to the West to reap in the golden harvest of dollars which I knew would follow such terrific publicity. We played Fresno, Stockton, Sacramento and Oakland on four successive Saturdays and Sundays. I had the public steamed up to the whistling point. There

were twenty-four-sheet stands on every wall and fence in California; every man, woman and child wanted to see Beachey.

All Grand-Stand Seats

We leased grounds which would accommodate 50,000 people and threw open the gates. Every gate had an armed guard ready to protect the silver harvest which was to flow into our moneybags. But no crowd materialized, nor were any dollars paid to see Beachey loop the loop. Selling tickets to see Beachey loop the loop in mid-air was like selling pasteboards entitling the holders to see a free eclipse of the sun. The crowds numbered up to 100,000, but they didn't crash the gates. They stayed outside the fields in the roads and meadows, where they could get a fair, impartial view of Beachey in his aerial convulsions. It was then I realized that Barnum had a canvas over his circus to prevent the public from stealing free looks at his animals. We lost a ton of money on the four towns and Beachey suggested another retirement. I vetoed this, as I couldn't retire without the permission of a referee in bankruptcy. I asked Beachey to reconsider his retirement until I could think up a plan to outwit the public.

The idea came to me that same night. I wired Barney Oldfield, who had also retired from automobile racing, and asked him to bring his fastest car to join me in San Francisco. In figuring out the failure of Beachey's exhibitions, I realized that I had made a mistake in having the lithographer depict Beachey turning loops in the clouds. This tipped the public off that they could spot him from any section of the state and canceled the necessity of buying tickets. I discarded the twenty-four-sheets showing Beachey high above the earth and had a new batch printed in which he was shown skimming the ground directly above a thundering four-wheeled avalanche. In that avalanche were the familiar features of

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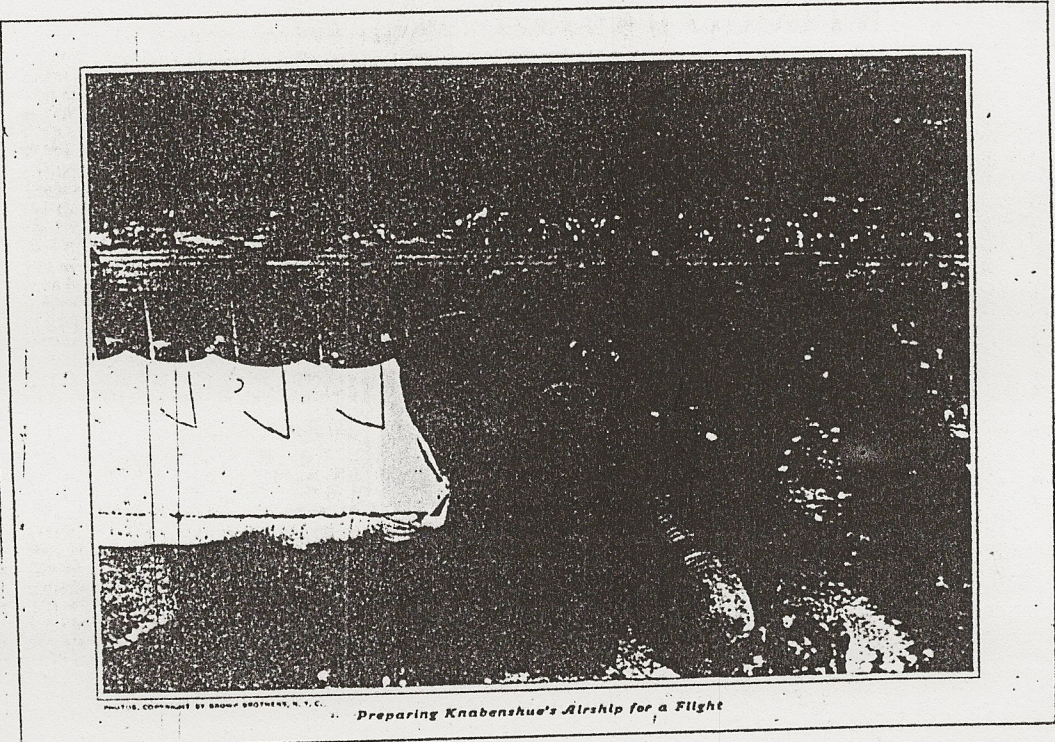
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Preparing Knabenshue's Airship for a Flight

(Continued from Page 146)

Oldfield, smoking his famous cigar, while he drove a Cyclone at the loitering speed of 100 miles an hour. The legend on the poster informed the amazed public that the Demon of the Sky would race the Darcdevil of the Ground for the championship of the earth, air and water—which were three very necessary elements for the comfort of man.

Then before I launched forth on the greatest bullyhoo that Oldfield and Beachey ever got, I hired fifty carpenters and built the fences ten feet higher. If anybody was going to see my next show free he would have to find a knot hole in the fence. Oldfield had no idea of my object in asking him to come to San Francisco, and his first inkling of the scheme was when he looked out of his Pullman window and saw himself twenty-four-sheeted on the side of a barn. When he saw himself in a racing car with an airplane riding on his neck he realized that Will H. Pickens had evolved a new method of endangering the lives of retired dare-devils.

The posters were beautiful examples of the paint factory's art. There are only seven primary colors in the spectrum, but my taste in posters had graduated from the primary class years before. When I selected posters I was in the high school. Oldfield had only one objection to the bombastic pictures, and that protest was based on the fact that the posters portrayed Beachey's plane perched on Barney's cap. Beachey had an uncanny judgment of distance which was so certain that I advertised him to land a wheel on the butt end of an egg, bump the egg just hard enough to break its shell, and then zoom upward into the sky again. He did this on Easter Sunday in San Diego. I selected a nice, fresh egg from cold storage, showed it to the ten officials of the meet and then placed the egg in the center of a white sheet on the landing field.

Too Many Loops

Beachey rose 900 or 1000 feet and then dropped in a nose dive straight for the egg. He leveled off about fifty feet from the ground, continued on toward the egg and skimmed lightly across the sheet amid the cheers of the crowd. I ran out and got the egg, bringing it back to the committee, who saw the shell was slightly cracked. That made good copy for the newspapers and we pulled it right along at small fairs. I forgot to tell the committees that on my way out to place the pearl of the farmyard on the sheet I tapped its shell lightly with a fountain pen, thereby being sure of a cracked egg even if Beachey should miss it—which he always did.

The new combination of Oldfield and Beachey was one of the greatest outdoor amusement combinations ever known. It was purely a hippodrome, Barney winning one day and Beachey copping the next. Whenever Beachey wanted to win, all he had to do was to drop his plane in front of Barney's car and Barney would be forced to coast in second. This combination cleaned up \$250,000 in its first year.

Oldfield and Beachey were equal attractions. I used Barney to get the reluctant spectators inside the gates, for he broke the track records day after day. After the thrilling race Beachey would go up and loop the loop.

At first a single loop was enough to make the weed benders gasp out their gold bridge work, but as the novelty wore off he was compelled to break his own records. He worked up from one loop to two, to three and finally up to nine.

One day in Sacramento he did ten amid the plaudits of the Western coast. The Sacramento newspaper which screamed this news to the world the next day also ran a small item about an Englishman named Hamel who had accomplished twenty-seven loops the same afternoon.

The next Sunday Beachey was forced to do twenty-eight loops to retain the upside-down laurels for America. Then some jealous Frenchman did sixty-four and

Beachey topped this with sixty-five. He was finally doing eighty loops in an afternoon, but by that time the rubes were yawning.

A dare-devil feat should be accomplished but once an afternoon, provided it is embellished with proper bullyhooing. The minute you do it twice in the same spot the spectators think they can do it themselves. Eighty loops meant nothing but a willful waste of time and gasoline. Hamel certainly spoiled a good racket when he did twenty-seven in one fling. Hamel was the mysterious English flyer who was supposed to have been lost in the North Sea at the start of the World War.

Remember the Oregon!

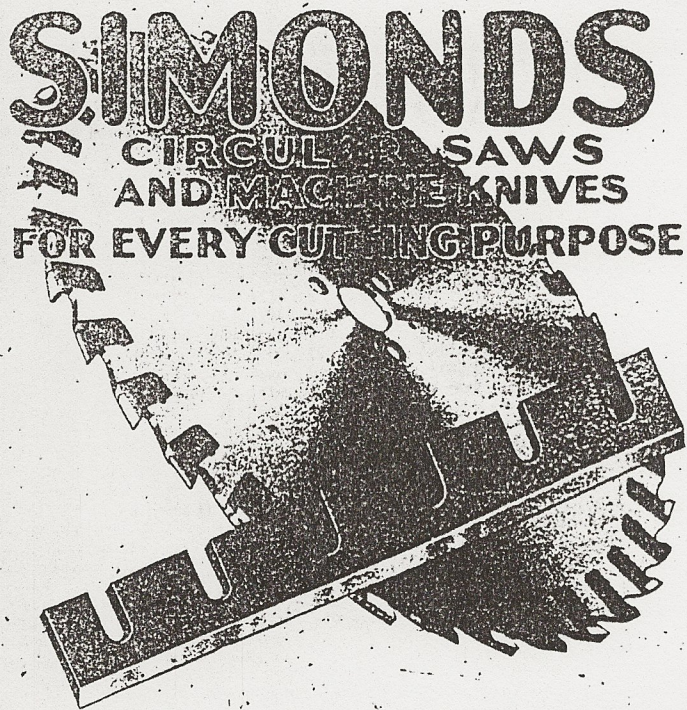
I took the Oldfield-Beachey combination into every city in the country, big and little. There was one city I was very anxious to play and that was Dayton, Ohio, home of Orville Wright, who still insisted that the loop was an optical illusion, even though Beachey had been doing it for six months. We gave Wright his first view of Beachey on August 1, 1914. Wright watched Beachey through his field glasses and then admitted that, if his eyes hadn't deceived him, his opera glasses were cheating. He shook hands warmly with Beachey after the looping and admitted that the loop was a fixture in aviation. We collected \$22,000 in Dayton that day from a crowd of 30,000. The net was \$18,000, which was divided three ways between Oldfield, Beachey and myself.

Beachey's biggest afternoon was the day he blew up the battleship in San Francisco Bay before the Panama-Pacific Exposition opened. I again put on a magnificent bullyhoo, with twenty-four-sheets depicting Beachey bombing the battleship Oregon. The picture was a composite photograph made up by newspaper artists. The battleship was the Oregon, all right, but the smoke and flames of the explosion were the upper half of a photo of a burning oil well which had been struck by lightning. The fragments of iron and steel flying through the air, which made the poor old Oregon look like a bursting junk yard, were borrowed from a picture of a collision between two locomotives at a state fair in Arizona. The affair was such a success that I sank the Oregon later on in Chicago, St. Louis, Brighton Beach and many other places.

Both Oldfield and Beachey complained that they had a difficult time being as brave and as reckless as my twenty-four-sheets. The actual battleship sunk was the Gorgonzola, and it was made of wood and painted canvas, about 200 feet in length. This structure was erected on two barges and topped off with masts and funnels. It was placed in position a mile from shore and 80,000 people gathered on the exposition grounds to watch Beachey sink the boat. There was a crew of 100 sailors on board the Gorgonzola. I borrowed them from the training ship at Goat Island. There were six young fellows up in the crow's nest and women fainted when a puff of smoke from Beachey's plane indicated that he had dropped his first bomb. There was an answering explosion from the Gorgonzola, for Beachey was a sharpshooter that day. The men started to faint, too, when Beachey dropped fifty bombs in quick succession and made fifty dead hits on the decks of the battleship.

The crowd was in a state of panic, because they did not think that Will H. Pickens would massacre a crew of 100 American sailors. The majority left in a daze, but the morning papers explained everything. When the smoke of the explosions hid the wreck, a tug took off the crew. Beachey then continued his ruthless destruction. But he never dropped a bomb. The only ammunition he had aloft was some black smoke powder which he touched off in a papier-mâché gun.

The Gorgonzola was decorated with a series of smoke pots, ground bombs and dynamite, augmented with mortars. These fireworks were hooked up by electric wires



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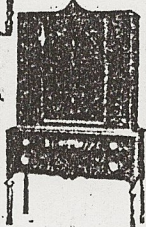
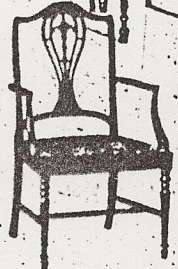
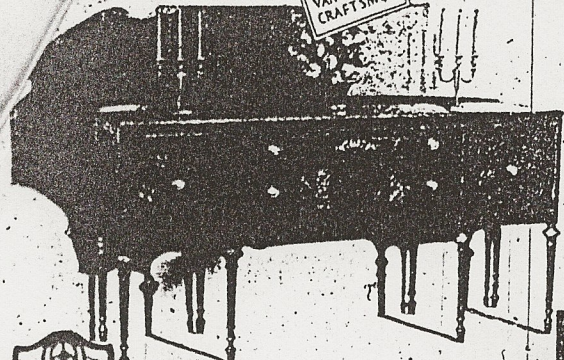
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to a tug lying back of the Gorgonzola. Every time Beachey touched off his paste-board cannon a man on the tug pressed a button, which exploded the dynamite on the battleship. By pressing other buttons he could ignite smoke pots, ground bombs and cause the mortars to eject a shell known in fireworks circles as an aerial salute, which whizzed into the air for 1000 feet and then exploded with a terrific noise that rocked the shores of San Francisco.

Even when Beachey was two miles away from the doomed craft, he continued to make direct hits on her superstructure. Her guns, turrets and masts all were blown to souvenirs. That year's medal for the best gun crew in the Navy should have gone to the man who pressed the buttons on the tug. He didn't miss the Gorgonzola once. The exposition authorities paid the expenses of lining the battleship with dynamite and bombs. That cost \$5000. The take at the gate was \$16,437.60. It would have been larger if the exposition authorities hadn't limited us to charging twenty-five cents for adults and ten cents for children. Beachey got 50 per cent of the take, which gave him a profit of \$8218.80 for the afternoon.

This stunt was one of a series in my great aerial and military-preparedness spectacles which I had outlined for Beachey during 1915. I had Beachey ballyhooed all over the world and he was the outstanding feature in aviation: I got the preparedness-campaign idea following his qualifying six Curtiss planes after the army experts had said the Curtiss planes would not come up to government specifications.

The planes were about to be turned back to Curtiss because the army flyers could not climb 5000 feet in five minutes. Curtiss wired Beachey in the West and told him of his predicament:

Diplomatic Publicity

Beachey flew all the planes, and as he came down in the last one he went through a series of evolutions and aerial gymnastics which were looked upon as demoralizing to the young army aviators. His most outrageous stunt was to dance a jig with his landing wheels on the flat roof of an army hangar. The official word was passed on and Beachey was barred.

It was up to me to get Beachey back into government favor, for my preparedness-spectacle campaign called for an initial flight in Washington, with its sure-fire front pages of unpurchasable publicity. It was up to Will H. Pickens to start a ballyhooing and a shillabering that would get results. This time I used no twenty-four-sheets. Instead of the usual hooing and shilling, I purchased a pair of rubber heels, and throttling my exhaust within the city limits, I went to digging tunnels like a mole.

I enlisted the support of Chance M. Vought, associate editor of *Aero and Hydro*, a Chicago aviation weekly which had been forcing a campaign in an endeavor to cause Congress to donate adequate appropriations for military aircraft. I suggested to Vought that it would be a great idea for the future of aviation if Beachey were invited by government aviation officials to demonstrate man's mastery of the air to the country's lawmakers. But, I explained carefully, Beachey would not go to Washington if there were any suspicion that he was doing it to gain personal capital

out of the exhibition. In proof of this, he would cancel the trip if any announcement leaked out in the newspapers. Vought wrote to the chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, who replied that he appreciated the value of the suggestion. When I saw his reply, I traded my rubber heels for a bass drum and prepared to make some noise. Science hath its victories, as well as brute strength.

Seeing Is Believing

Beachey was to fly on Monday, September 28, 1914, and he was to be watched by President Wilson, his cabinet, members of Congress and everybody in Washington who could bend a neck to the rear. On the preceding Saturday, Beachey gathered in \$8000 flying on a percentage basis at the Illinois State Fair in Springfield. While I was checking up this money, Beachey got a wire from the Bureau of Aeronautics asking him for permission to publish his name in Monday morning's *Washington Post*. It was to be a dignified announcement which would in no way detract from Beachey's prestige.

I told Beachey to wire back and permit them to publish his name. This was a great personal sacrifice on my part, for by now you can understand how I hated publicity. When that wire was sent it was the first time in my life that I missed the presence of a paper hoop or something else to jump through.

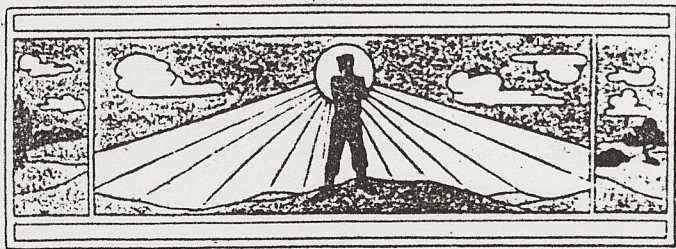
Beachey was in Washington Monday morning and the dignified announcement consisted of a front-page story in the *Post*. Beachey made two morning flights from the Polo Field, which was one of the government fields that had been barred to him. He made the first flight for the members of Congress and then put on a special show for President Wilson. He looped the loop, tore off sizzling vertical drops, flew upside down, demonstrated numerous roll-overs, side slips, tail spins and other maneuvers, which were as startling thirteen years ago as an Atlantic flight is today.

Then we packed up and left for Brockton, Massachusetts, where he flew the next day and collected \$7500. I had arranged his exhibition so that it would not interfere with the practical side of aviation. The deluge of publicity which swamped us after the Washington flight was tremendous. The reason Beachey wasn't all on the front pages was because the make-up men in the composing rooms had to break up the story and carry it over into the inside pages. I resigned from diplomatic ballyhooing and went in strong for the robust outdoor brand.

Beachey became such a national name that on the editorial page of the *Indianapolis Star* for Wednesday, July 22, 1914, there appeared this sentence: "It's a front-page story every day that Lincoln Beachey remains alive."

Beachey was to be a front-page story for but eight more months. We went back to the coast after the outdoor season in the East and he bombed the Gorgonzola on New Year's Day, 1915. Then he opened the Panama-Pacific Exposition on February twentieth and flew every day until the fourteenth of March. On that day he flew for the fourth time in a monoplane of his own making, modeled after the German Taube. He had made three test flights in this plane, but only at very low altitudes. His first public flight in the Taube was before 50,000 people on the exposition

(Continued on Page 154)



(Continued from Page 150)

back without my ballyhoos. He was a professional dare-devil, and no professional dare-devil ever quits. It is the same spirit that keeps Walter Johnson on the pitching mound after twenty years of service in front of the public. Barney Oldfield retired a half dozen times and always returned. If you think that old Barney is through, let me remind you that only last July he drove a 1000-mile test against a speedway record in Los Angeles and broke it. Jim Jeffries came back and Benny Leonard will make the attempt.

It's in the blood. One of my dare-devils was Jake De Rosier, the pioneer of motorcycling in America. He held many records for motorcycle racing on board and dirt tracks. He retired on the average of once a week, but couldn't withstand the lure of the flaming billboards. He was severely injured in an accident on a board track in 1912 out on the coast. It was necessary to amputate his right leg, and when I visited him the same night in the hospital, he smiled up from his pillows and said, "Bill, I'm through for good this time."

I knew he was, for the surgeons had told me before I entered the room. They allowed me to stay for a scant five minutes, but I saw he was following the pacemaker who leads to eternity. Jake must have thought over his retirement during those five minutes, for when I arose to leave he smiled again and whispered, "Bill, ballyhoo me as the only one-legged motorcyclist in the world, will you?"

But Jake never saw the twenty-four-sheets. Editor's Note—This is the first of a series of articles by Mr. Pickens. The next will appear in the November twelfth issue.

The machine embedded itself in the mud under thirty feet of water. Beachey was hopelessly strapped in the only fuselage in which he had ever ridden. A launch and sixteen divers were sent over from the battleship Oregon—the same boat which Beachey had so often bombed in canvas effigy. It required the services of a derrick on a lighter to lift the Taube out of the mud. Beachey was still firmly held in his seat by safety straps.

The editor of the Indianapolis Star was wrong about it being a front-page story every day that Beachey remained alive. He was a front-page story the day after his death. Beachey had retired four times, but each time my twenty-four-sheets had pulled him back. But he would have come

back without my ballyhoos. He was a professional dare-devil, and no professional dare-devil ever quits. It is the same spirit that keeps Walter Johnson on the pitching mound after twenty years of service in front of the public. Barney Oldfield retired a half dozen times and always returned. If you think that old Barney is through, let me remind you that only last July he drove a 1000-mile test against a speedway record in Los Angeles and broke it. Jim Jeffries came back and Benny Leonard will make the attempt.

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55	c	1400	Basting Fuller	85	Basting Fuller	84	Edge & Sleeve Presser	05	c	1400	Edge & Sleeve Presser	
53	c	1400	Bottomhole Maker	83	Bottomhole Maker	84	Bottomhole Maker	05	c	1400	Bottomhole Maker	2-2 2-3 2-8
61	c	1400	Edge Sticker	81	Edge Sticker	82	Marking Bottomhole	03	c	1400	Marking Bottomhole	
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45	c	1400							c	1400	Armhole Presser	
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41	c	1400							c	1400	Collar Presser	
39	c	1400							c	1400	Collar Presser	
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