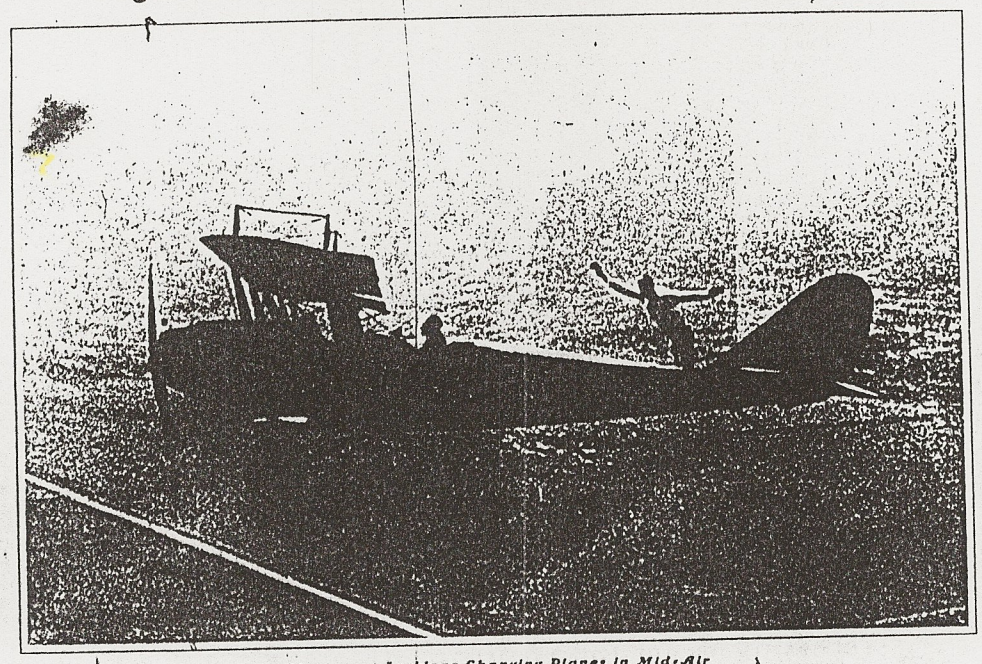
ACCELERATING SENTIMENT

By William Hickman Pickens



Lieutenant Locklear Changing Planes in Mid-Air

ON SATURDAY afternoon, April 25, 1925, more than 48,000 people sat in the Los Angeles Coliseum, a magnificent concrete bowl dedicated by Southern California to amateur sports. The crowd rose and cheered wildly as a baggy-looking figure stepped out of an arched tunnel into the sunlight, blinked, and then ambled around the running track in a practice lap. The figure was well bundled up in the loose collegiate sweat uniform, and as it ran it lifted its knees like a Burgundy peasant stamping wine grapes. That mob of 48,000 had paid to see Finland's greatest runner, and as he went by them, lifting his feet like a high-school horse, they yelled:

"Nurmi! Nurmi!"

If the baggy athlete was Nurmi, he didn't admit it. He completed his prim, concise trial jog and then went back into the tunnel without wasting a nod on his enthusiastic admirers. You could shout praises in Nurmi's ear all week and he wouldn't turn his head until Saturday night. It was practically impossible to snap his picture, as he insisted on turning his back on the cameramen.

Nurmi was quite a puzzle to me. Yet I took that personality of Nurmi's and utilized it to attract the greatest crowds that ever saw amateur athletic meets.

You might say that Will H. Pickens deserved no credit, for Nurmi is the world's greatest pathfinder. Before he had arrived in Los Angeles, he had left guiding footprints for Joie Ray, Lloyd Hahn, Willie Ritola and other great runners to follow. He had busted every clay pipe in the shooting gallery.

Ballyhoo for the Sudden Finn

THERE is an old saying that figures do not lie, but figurers do. My crowd of 48,000 was authenticated by official check-up. Let's see what the great Nurmi had accomplished before that. Aside from an attendance of 11,000 in the old Madison Square Garden, he toured the United States and Canada, drawing crowds of from 2000 to 5000 people. Up to Nurmi's appearance in California, the average attendance for field and track meets in Los Angeles was about 4000 or 5000.

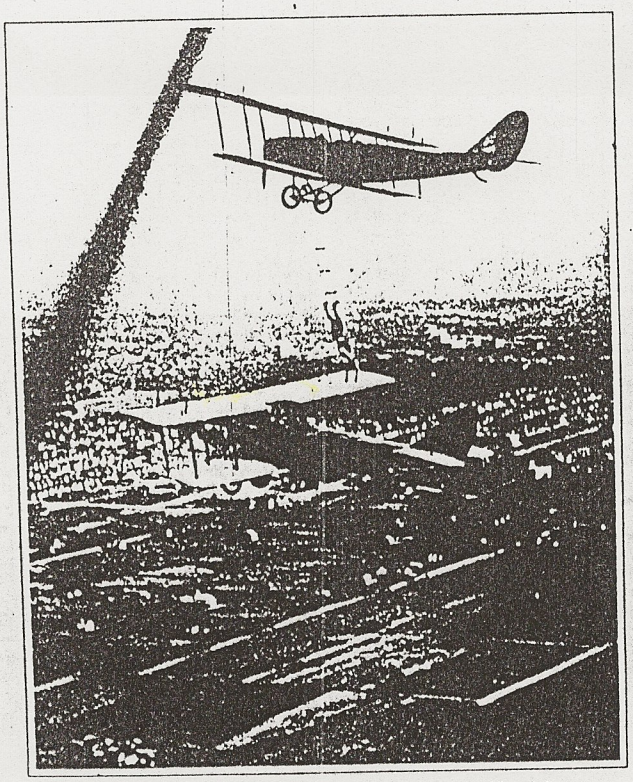
The sudden leap in attendance figures was stimulated by the hypodermic of professional ballyhooing. Before that, Nurmi had simply run on his merits. I made him run on his eccentricities.

My radical style of publicity resulted in frequent run-ins with the fundamentalists of the amateur athletic school, whose method of passing the hat at front doors clashed with Will H. Pickens' style of grabbing his coin at the gate. I crashed into the amateur racket under perfect auspices. The Los Angeles Post of the Rainbow Division had engaged the services of Paavo Nurmi at the suggestion of Harry Pollok, a New Yorker who had promoted the series of Marathons between Johnny Hayes and Dorando, immediately following the disputed finish at the London Olympics of 1908. The officials of the Rainbow Division got Nurmi's agreement to run in their benefit athletic meet and engaged my services to exploit it and make it the biggest thing of the year. I had two months, which is none too long, to smoke up the ballyhoo.

The first step was to plaster Los Angeles with twenty-four-sheets bearing the legend: Nurmi is Coming.

This information wasn't necessary for the real athletic fan, but was intended for the populace who didn't know whether Nurmi was a new soft drink or an antiseptic toothbrush. Soon the man in the street car began to ask the motorman about the identity of Nurmi. I allowed the twenty-four-sheets to soak in for two weeks, and then through the sport pages began to ask, "Who is Nurmi going to run against?"

That was something to nibble over. Nurmi had trimmed all opponents in America with the same ease that a lighthouse keeper trims a lampwick. There were no distance runners in the West whose records compared with Nurmi's. There is nothing more critical than a youthful athletic critic just out of college. The result was the creating of the general impression that Nurmi's exhibition in Los Angeles would be just that, and not a contest.



Tex McLaughlin Changing Planes While Hanging Head Down

Opponents

EVEN Charley Paddock, the great Olympic sprinter, got into the controversy and wrote an article in an afternoon paper in which he deplored the lack of real competition for the Finn. Paddock's article was so well written that I decided he was the man I wanted to see. And I was right, for Paddock's head moves as fast as his feet. I asked him if he could dig up any distance runners who could be used to smoke up Nurmi and still be good enough to make the affair a contest and not a farce.

He asked for a little time to scout around, and the next time I heard from him he was up at the Sherman Indian School at Riverside, California.

Two days later I was enthused to read one of Paddock's articles extolling the cross-country merits of the Far-West Indian, the only native American who stood a chance of showing Nurmi the way to gallop over a landscape. It took an amateur star to provide a professional promoter with the pith, bone and marrow of the steam-up for the Nurmi ballyhoo. The faculty of the Sherman School was most enthusiastic over the idea and immediately started a group of twelve of their sturdiest Indian athletes leaping and hopping all around the mountains. These Indian lads from Sherman were real scooters who thought nothing of running from breakfast to dinner just to work up an appetite for supper.

Paddock volunteered to show the Indians how to make his quick starts and flashing finishes. I sent a press agent out to the school and every day the California papers got a new load of information. One day the boys would train on pemmican. The next day they would run in moccasins. Then they would discard the leather ground-grippers and skip around barefoot. They did everything but scamper in rubber boots. They ate jerked deer meat, which endowed them with such superhuman running powers that we were forced to sprain their ankles in order to get them to bed. They discarded the orthodox methods of training owing to the lack of able pacemakers. They warmed up by short sprints after jack rabbits in the desert and, for a longer jaunt, would run down a wild horse or a mountain goat. Los Angeles began to wonder where these phenomenons had been hiding all the time.

When the startling news of these ever-ready Marathoners began to filter Eastward it was time to hear from Nurmi, at this time gradually working his way Westward. Now

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ACCELERATING SENTIMENT

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Nurmi spoke no English and read no newspapers. He was a simple, democratic citizen of Finland. His only information was derived from perusing forwarded copies of the Abo Turun Sanomat, or some other Finnish paper printed the morning after an Arctic six months' evening.

Paavo didn't know a thing about the terrible Indian competition and therefore wasn't worrying. So I had to send another press agent East to do Nurmi's personal worrying. This publicity man sent news back to Los Angeles telling how Nurmi was enjoying sleepless nights after reading of the ruthless red avengers who ran with tomahawks in one hand and scalped their defeated rivals at the finish line. Meanwhile the ticket sale opened. The next item was that Nurmi dreaded the trip over the Western deserts. The intense heat would sap his vitality, making him easy prey for Indians used to running under a boiling sun and an equally blistering moon. That press agent got too enthusiastic and did everything but quit for Nurmi.

A Lesson for Pedestrians

We discovered that it would be impossible for the Finn to obtain his favorite diet of black bread and fish in California. That was a problem; but we figured one way of overcoming Nurmi's fear of the heat. The manager of a big cold-storage plant offered to put a bed in an ice box. Nurmi could live there during his stay in California. Don't forget that the newspapers were printing this stuff every day. We played the heat wave up so strong that the fireproof Indians were made favorites for the race.

I forgot to inform the Californians that this taciturn Finlander had won Olympic contests on one of the hottest Parisian days known in history. While Italians, South Americans, Greeks and other tropical athletes keeled over under the blazing skies, this puzzling northerner, from the icy detours, branched out in full bloom. He ran the greatest of all his contests and took quinine at the finish line to ward off a chill. I didn't think it was necessary to impart this information to Californians, as I considered it to be a secret between myself and the government weather bureaus.

A week before the race we brought the Sherman Indian students to town to try out the cinder track. After trotting a few feet on hostile cinders, the barefooted lads decided to wear shoes. We gave them the best rooms in the hotel and that started another ballyhoo. They refused to live indoors. We could only pacify them by erecting tribal tepees on the roof of the hotel. All of which made fine news photographs. A survey of the first week's meal checks convinced Will H. Pickens that his aborigines had canceled their ancestors' diet of pemmican and jerked meat and were investigating the calories and vitamins in sirloin steaks, saddle of lamb, ham and eggs, artichokes hollandaise and other kinds of expensive foodstuffs. When one of them ordered a meal he simply pointed his finger at the sixty items on the menu and said "And coffee."

Los Angeles was right in the throes of what the citizens called a foolish law. All street corners had been marked out in white lines like tennis courts. Pedestrians were forced to stand on the curbs until the traffic officers blew a whistle, the signal for them to scurry across the street. Up to this time the native Californian had been accustomed to do his own thinking when crossing rivers, oceans or boulevards.

I hired a lot of motion-picture extras, dressed them in running suits and sent them all over the city in crews. Each crew of seven was chaperoned by an official starter with a cap pistol. These runners would line up on the curb with their hands on the ground like champion athletes. When the traffic officer blew his whistle, the starter would fire his cap pistol and the runners would run like a congress of idiots across the street. Then they would line up and get ready to sprint in the opposite direction.

This was great fun for pedestrians and newspapers alike, and also amused the police. Remember that we were getting all this nonsense into the daily papers. No ballyhoo is useful if it is kept a secret. And every one of those cross-street leapers had a sign on his back advising readers that Nurmi would soon appear at the Coliseum.

These crews were augmented by an auxiliary team of ten young Indians, also dressed up in athletic uniforms. They were scattered all over town, with instructions to keep running. These Indians had no signs on their backs, but they were Indians, and by this time everybody knew that Nurmi was going to be defeated for the first time by the red men. You couldn't go anywhere in town without spotting a young Indian, plodding along seriously. Each one of these lads received five dollars for a union running day of eight hours' duration.

It was now within a week of the Rainbow Division's big day at the Coliseum. So we sped up on production. Every bottle of milk delivered in Southern California during those seven days had a tag hung on it. This tag read: "What makes the slim Finn win? Milk!"

Hotels, clubs and restaurants were startled when real rubes walked in at all hours of the day and night. These rural visitors were escorting sixteen-year-old boys dressed in running trunks and jerseys. They told the world that they were from Bird Center, Ioway, and that they were in town to match their boys against Nur-Mi.

I will say that these rubes worked hard. They would ask foolish questions of policemen, go into banks at the rush hours, squeeze ahead of a long line of depositors and ask for change for a dollar, mostly in nickels. They were willing to bet anything up to fifteen cents that their boys could whip Nur-Mi, their only proviso being that they be permitted to hold the stakes.

This was all supplemental to the twenty-four-sheet advertising, other printed matter in store windows, banners on street cars and the invaluable spreads on sporting pages of newspapers. There were also twenty big banners across main streets, telling the Western world that Nurmi was on the way.

Trick Photography

Nurmi was now making the perilous trip over the dreaded desert. My man kept California informed of his progress. His first sight of an Indian was obtained at Albuquerque, New Mexico. We had enlisted the support of a New Mexican publicity man. When Nurmi alighted on the platform to stretch his legs he found himself in the middle of a dozen Indian braves, naked except for breech clouts. They circled around Nurmi, ran around the train, looped around the station and galloped out over the flat distance in ever-widening circles, whooping and yelling like sea lions.

I don't know what effect this had on the Finn, but my press agent was exceedingly worried. We got plenty of publicity with this stunt, even though Nurmi never gave it a rumble. His face was what showmen call a dead pan, with no more expression than an artificial lake.

During all this time I had been asleep at the switch, for I had overlooked a most important detail. This fact was brought home to me by a newspaper man. I scurried into his office one morning with a picture of an Indian breaking the world's record for a nose dive into a California grapefruit. Ray told me that I had worn out the Indian racket, and if I wanted to keep up my reputation I would have to get a picture of Nurmi posing with a girl.

This was a tough job, as Nurmi was known as a woman hater. During his entire time in America, no newspaper had snapped a picture of Nurmi talking with a flapper. I met Nurmi's train out at Barstow and made a proposal to Hugo Quist, who was Nurmi's manager, that we try to get this snapshot. Quist told me there wasn't a chance. I had my photographer with me, and when we got to Pasadena I asked Nurmi to pose with Quist during the ten-minute stop. The photographer placed Quist and Nurmi side by side, about two feet apart. While he was ostensibly focusing his camera, a beautiful girl came walking up from the rear, elbowed her way into the space between Nurmi and Quist and then said "Pardon me."

Nurmi turned his head to see what it was all about, the beautiful girl fluttered her eyelids and smiled, and that's when we snapped the picture.

I gave the picture to all the Los Angeles papers and it was a riot. The first picture ever taken of Nurmi suggested a budding romance and the rumor that Nurmi was a woman hater was dissipated. Fortunately, Nurmi confined his reading efforts to the Abo Turun Sanomat. Otherwise he might have refused to run.

An Elimination Contest

Only three days remained until the date of the race and further ballyhooing took care of itself. Nurmi was there with his black bread and fish and the managing editors turned loose their star reporters. However, I got one good smoke-up in those three days. The first question asked by Hugo Quist was about the distance to be run. I told him that the Indians wanted to run from sunup to sundown. Quist asked for a two-mile race, otherwise Nurmi would refuse to participate. Then the Indians agreed to come down to ten miles. Quist held out for two. The Indians chiseled their bid down to seven.

No champion fighters ever squabbled more over a referee than Quist and the Indians did over the distance. It was meat for the sporting writers. The Californians, knowing the Indians were distance runners, denounced Quist's stand as unsportsmanlike. The Indians made a final slice to five miles and stuck there. By the time the newspapers ran out of space it was the evening before the race. Then Quist and the Indians compromised on three miles, which, by some strange coincidence, was the exact distance stipulated in the contract signed by Nurmi two months before as the only distance that Paavo would run in Los Angeles.

It was careless of me to forget that contract, but it earned plenty of shillabering in the newspapers. You already know the size of the crowd. There were ten Sherman Indians lined up on the tape, ready to run Nurmi into the ground and then pat him in the face with a spade. Nurmi came out of the arched tunnel again and took his place on the line. He had doffed his baggy shirt and trousers and looked pale and chilly.

The race was good at the start, the mob roaring cheerfully as eight of the ten Sherman lads leaped ahead of Nurmi, who ran along looking at his wrist watch like a doctor feeling his own pulse. There were only four Indians left at the end of the race, with Nurmi winning by 300 yards. But the crowd had got its great thrill, for Nurmi didn't pass his last Indian until the race was almost three-quarters over.

Of the eleven starters, Nurmi was the only man running at his right distance. The four Indians who remained to the end were real distance men who could make no kind of showing under five or ten miles. The ones who dropped out were sprinters, who ran their string out and then collapsed. Showmanship had been injected into the staging of the contest as well as into the ballyhoo.

Those sprinters made Nurmi look very dumb when they jumped into the lead at the gun, but when one poor old 100-yard Indian got to 110 yards you couldn't have

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started him on with a cannon. The rest of the sprinters went the same way, but continued on until hopelessly distanced.

The sequel to the Nurmi-Indian contest was written in Los Angeles in May, 1927, just two years after the Rainbow Division meet. Another meet was held and its star was Edvin Wide, Swedish runner and conqueror of Nurmi. The meet was held after six weeks of conservative advertising, with no rough, manly ballyhooing. Wide was opposed by two great middle-distance runners and was defeated in an exciting race. He got plenty of newspaper publicity before the race, but it lacked the kick of the genuine shillaber. The result was an anæmic crowd of only 2000 people.

My handling of an amateur tournament was considered scandalous by the delicate amateur athletic officials. But you cannot knock the public cold by whacking them over the head with a chocolate éclair. You have to sandbag them. Still another and greater shock was administered a few months later. C. C. Pyle, known better as Cash-and-Carry, gumshoed on golden heels into the sacred halls of the University of Illinois and stole Red Grange from under the very beaks of the Simon-pures. Cash-and-Carry saw the possibilities of Red while operating a movie in Champaign, Illinois. They became friends, with the result that Red got the nodding privilege at Cash-and-Carry's show house. The nod meant that Red could crash the gates of the movie show without digging down into his kick for the usual price of admission. In England the nod is known as the proud horse and gets the same results as the nod in America. Now this was a very important item in Red's life, for he was a poor boy, receiving absolutely no help outside that given by his father, in his efforts to work his way through college.

While the Iron Was Hot

Red played an All-American brand of football for Coach Bob Zuppke, who is himself a professional tutor of athletics, and it was Red's efforts that helped to build the magnificent Illinois stadium.

Yet a hue and cry went up when Red leaped straight from college football into the professional game without waiting to get a much-coveted diploma. American amateurism had been trampled upon by Cash-and-Carry. The flood of adverse criticism shook Red's nerve, but the imperturbable Cash-and-Carry carried the boy on to cash and fame.

Now Red is so rich that he can afford to go back to college again. If he had waited six months for his diploma the ballyhoo would have worn off and he wouldn't have been worth a dime as a professional attraction. And by the way, that ballyhoo was steamed up by the indignant college faculties themselves. They whooped, raved and ranted until newspaper editors awoke to the news value of Red's enormous offense and gave his switch its proper ratio of daily space. This gave professional football its initial impetus, which culminated when Ernie Nevers, of Stanford, got $25,000 for one season's work. I got the fever myself and managed George Wilson, who was known as Wildcat Wilson when playing with the University of Washington.

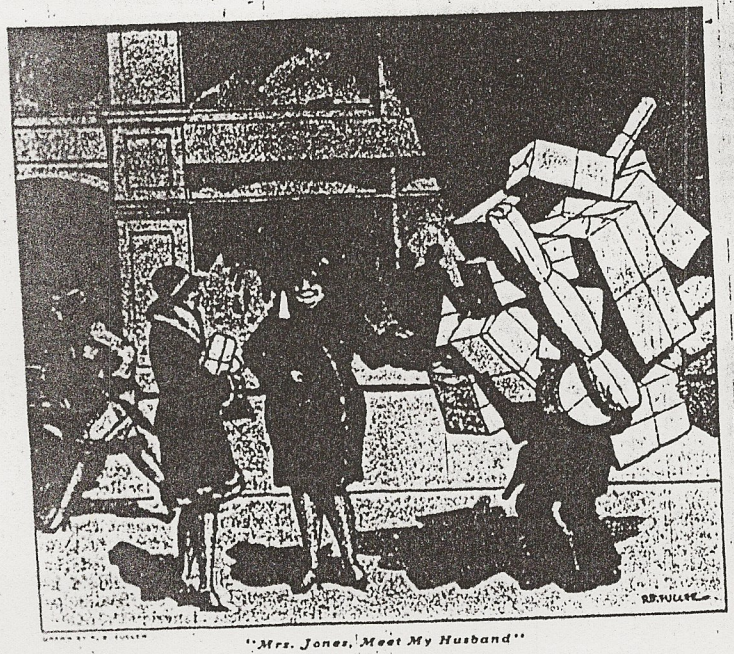
An example of the drawing power of these boys was demonstrated in Los Angeles on January 17, 1926. Red's team played against Wildcat's professional eleven and drew $145,000. Which, as we would say in showdom, is quite a take.

The End of One Good Racket

Cash-and-Carry is a new type of professional promoter who triples the box-office take of his celebrities by his uncanny manipulation of by-products. He is fortunate in that he gets his ballyhooing free from his intellectual enemies in amateur athletic circles. If Cash-and-Carry wanted to make some acknowledgment of his debt to the University of Illinois, he should bequeath the college a dormitory and call it Shillaber Hall.

The methods I used during my short trip in amateur athletics were no different from the hokum I employed to put over my professionals. The handling of the Sherman Indians was no attempt to fool the public. It was aimed to arouse interest through the medium of amusement. I would have been in a tough spot if the Indians had failed to give Nurmi a contest for three-quarters of the distance.

I took even a greater chance with Lieutenant Locklear, of the United States Army. My fleet of airplanes was worth nothing after the war, for the Government dumped a lot of planes on the market at a few hundred dollars each. Where I used to get from $1000 to $4000 an afternoon for a loop-the-loop aviator, it was now possible to hire an all-day looper for fifty dollars a week. I knew more of the exhibition possibilities of trick flying than any other promoter and realized that the racket was over. Every small town had its returned war flyer with his secondhand government



"Mrs. Jones, Meet My Husband"

Week of December 26th

WOULD you bid Hearts or No Trump on Mr. Smith's hand (South) below—Clubs or Spades on Mr. Work's (West)? See if you can bid this hand like the experts. The Declarer makes game. Can you? Try it your way; then be ready with your players to hear this game as scheduled below.

John H. Smith, Ridgewood, N. J., dealer, South
Spades ..... Q, J, 7, 4
Hearts ..... A, K, J, 6, 3
Diamonds ..... K, 10
Clubs ..... K, Q

Ralph J. Leibenderfer, New York, North
Spades 3
Hearts 10, 9, 7, 4
Diamonds ..... J, 8, 7, 6, 5
Clubs ..... J, 4, 3

Milton C. Work, New York, West
Spades ..... A, K, 8, 5, 2
Hearts ..... none
Diamonds 9, 3
Clubs 10, 9, 8, 6, 5, 2

Wilbur C. Whitehead, New York, East
Spades 10, 9, 6
Hearts ..... Q, 8, 5, 2
Diamonds ..... A, Q, 4, 2
Clubs ..... A, 7

Tuesday, December 27, 10 P. M., Eastern Time

WEAF, WSAI, KSD, WCAE, WCCO, WCSH, WDAF, WEEI, WFI, WGN, WGR, WGY, WHAS, WHO, WJAR, WMC, WOC, WOW, WRC, WSB, WSM, WTAG, WTAM, WTIC, WTMG, WWJ.

Tuesday, December 27, 8:30 P. M., Pacific Time

KFI, KFOA, KGW, KHQ, KOMO, KPO, KGO.

See newspapers for broadcasting time of following:

KFAD	Electrical Equipment Co. ... Phoenix	WJBO	Times-Picayune ... New Orleans
KFUM	Corley Mt. Highway ... Colorado Springs	WKY	Radiophone Co. ... Oklahoma City
KFYR	Hoskins-Meyer ... Bismarck	WNOX	Peoples Tel. & Tel. Co. ... Knoxville
KGBX	Foster-Hall Tire Co. ... St. Joseph, Mo.	WPG	Municipal Station ... Atlantic City
KOA	General Electric Co. ... Denver	WRVA	Larus & Bro. Co. ... Richmond, Va.
KOB	Coll. Agr. & Mech. Arts ... Albuquerque	WWNC	Chamber of Commerce ... Asheville, N. C.
KPRC	Post Dispatch ... Houston	CFAC	Herald ... Calgary, Can.
KSL	Radio Service Corp. ... Salt Lake City	CFLC	Radio Ass'n. ... Prescott, Can.
KTHS	Arlington Hotel ... Hot Springs Nat'l Pk.	CFQC	Electric Shop ... Saskatoon, Can.
KVOO	Southwestern Sales Corp. ... Tulsa, Okla.	CHNS	Northern Elec. Co. ... Halifax, Can.
KWUC	Rex Frolkey ... Sioux City	CJCA	Journal ... Edmonton, Can.
WCOA	City of Pensacola ... Pensacola, Fla.	CJGC	Free Press ... London, Can.
WDAY	Radio Equipment Corp. ... Fargo	CJRM	Jas. Richardson & Sons ... Moose Jaw, Can.
WDBO	Orlando Broadcasting Co. ... Orlando, Fla.	CKAC	La Presse ... Montreal, Can.
WFAA	Baker Hotel, News, Sears-Roebuck ... Dallas	CKCD	Daily Province ... Vancouver, Can.
WFBM	Indianapolis P. & L. Co. ... Indianapolis	CKCI	Le Soleil ... Quebec, Can.
WHEC	Hickson Electric Company ... Rochester	CKCO	Radio Ass'n. ... Ottawa, Can.
WJAX	Municipal Station ... Jacksonville	CKNC	Canadian Nat. Carbon Co. ... Toronto, Can.
	CKY ... Manitoba Tel. System ... Winnipeg, Can.		

Auction Bridge Magazine, 30 Ferry St., New York
The U. S. Playing Card Co., Cincinnati, U. S. A., Windsor, Canada

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plane, and trick flying was as common as eggs for breakfast.

I managed to sell my twenty prewar planes for a total of $6000 and dropped down to Texas to look over the oil wells in 1919. I was in the lobby of the Westbrook Hotel in Fort Worth, watching the oil gushing from the armchairs and oozing from the conversation of the wildcat promoters. Tex Rickard and Jess Willard were also down there at the same time for some oily reason easily explained by mysterious pawings over blue prints and maps. Tex brought over a young fellow in an army uniform and said, "Bill, here's a young fellow you should grab. Mr. Pickens, meet Lieutenant Locklear, who changes planes in the air."

During the introduction, Tex was indulging in slow, solemn winks, thereby giving me the office that Locklear was a bug. Nobody had ever changed planes in mid-air up to 1919. If they had, Will H. Pickens would surely have heard of it. Anyway, I knew it couldn't be done.

They Were Only Playing Leapfrog

"Glad to meet you, lieutenant," I said. "I've heard about that changing business." I hadn't, but thought it best to humor the bug before he demonstrated on my lapels. I was getting too old to have any athlete doing the giant swing on my necktie. "How do you manage to do the stunt without breaking your neck?"

"Well, I can't tell you," Locklear said. "It's a little secret. But here's some other tricks that I do." And he pulled some tiny pictures out of an inside pocket. These thumb-nail photos showed a man hanging by his knees from the undercarriage of an airplane, perched astride the tail of the plane like a clown on the rump of a circus mule, and standing upright on the upper wing. I didn't know whether the man was Locklear or not, but I can assure you that it was the first time I had ever seen evidence of acrobatics in the clouds. We later coined a ballyhoo for Locklear which he used with good effect. He became the world's first aerobat, a blending of air and acrobat.

He invited me out to Baron Field the next morning and I met Lieut. Milton Elliot and Lieut. Shirley Short, who were indispensable to Locklear's stunts. The only one now left of the trio is Short, who was recently cited by the Aero Club of France as being the most valuable mail pilot in the world. He flies the night air mail from Cleveland to Chicago.

Locklear went up with Short and did his aerobatic stuff, with Short at the stick. Then they came down to talk things over. Locklear went aloft in one plane and Elliot in another to play tag in the clouds. They showed me something I had never dreamed possible—the air kiss, two planes flying along with their wings overlapping.

That was eight years ago, and it's still good for a thrill at any state fair in the country. They are the only two men whom I have seen perform this feat. They played leapfrog in the skies, Locklear bringing his landing gear down until it rested on Elliot's top wing. Then Locklear stole a ride, a stunt exactly like a boy hitching his sled to a hay wagon. He brought his plane up from the rear until his fuselage rested on the tail of Elliot's plane. Not bad handling of aircraft at the rate of seventy miles an hour and no direction to fall but down.

Locklear was star instructor at Baron Field, a natural birdman like Beachey, who wasn't satisfied unless he was doing something new. Even when Locklear was a kid on a motorcycle, he invented motorized ski jumping, speeding his machine up an incline and shooting off the end in an effort to cover Texas with broken gears and spare parts. He built himself a homemade plane and flapped around his native state like a crow with rheumatic wings.

When Mr. Wilson decided that he had kept us out of war long enough, Locklear went into the army flying school and flashed a brand of overhead calisthenics that caused colonels and majors to rush for the cyclone cellars. His value as an instructor kept him from being sent across to the war zone, and I imagine that the monotony of camp life drove him to his amazing capers in the air.

After Elliot and Locklear had landed, I realized that they could do anything in the air and asked them to demonstrate the sensational business of changing planes in the sky. Locklear explained that he could do it all right, had often accomplished it before, but the commandant of the field threatened to court-martial him if he did it again. So I took his word for it and signed him up on the dotted line with special iron-clad dots. Then I hustled up to New York, grabbed the Sheepshead Bay Speedway for Decoration Day, 1919. I had enough cash to buy four planes at $2000 apiece. There was no plunder left in the cash box to purchase twenty-four-sheets, but I promoted a printer to make me up a line of printing, total value $30,000. That's some printing bill, but we used up $5000 worth plastering New York alone.

Locklear made application for discharge from the Army. So did Short and Elliot, and they were out in thirty days. In the meantime well-authenticated billboards testified to the fact that a man could change planes in mid-air. When the triumvirate of aerobats reached New York I hustled them to Atlantic City to give their first exhibition. Locklear would travel nowhere without Elliot and Short. The three went into the air over a crowd of aeronautic scientists who were convening at the seashore town. The wind was strong and kept blowing the rope ladder out of Locklear's reach. On the fourth attempt Locklear caught the ladder, and climbing it safely, changed planes for the first time in history.

When I say the first time in history, it seems that I have forgotten Texas. Well, that evening Locklear, Short and Elliot were laughing and romping in their dressing room; I asked them what the gag was, as I wanted to laugh also.

What Self-Confidence Can Do

Elliot said, nudging Short, "You tell 'im."

Short poked Locklear in the ribs, saying, "You tell 'im."

Locklear had nobody to poke but me, and he knew that I couldn't tell 'em, because I knew nothing about it. He looked sheepish and finally admitted: "We always knew we could do it. But this is the first time we ever did it."

It was the truth. The three flying bugs had never changed planes in the air before. They had talked it over many times in Texas and were confident of their ability. Anyway, I didn't scold them, for if they hadn't accomplished the stunt I would have been on the nut for $50,000 in printing, airplanes and ground rentals of hippodromes.

Glenn Curtiss saw Locklear change planes that day in Atlantic City. So did Eddie Stinson, builder of the Stinson-Detroiter round-the-world plane piloted by Brock and Schlee. Incidentally, Brock flew for me in Chicago and other cities, piloting the plane which picked Lillian Boyer out of a speeding motor car by way of the usual ladder route. It was the outstanding feature of big state fairs for two years. Stinson, who was an expert stunt pilot, was amazed at Locklear's performance, if we can judge from an article written by him for the Aerial Age and quoted by the Literary Digest of June 28, 1919:

> I have seen some nice balancing and daring driving of airplanes, but Lieutenant Locklear and those two pilots have shown me something new. While Locklear was swaying back and forth on top of the Short machine, Elliot swooped down from above, and so much confidence did those two drivers have in each other that the machines actually kissed each other, making it necessary for Locklear to flatten out on top of the plane. With cool daring he flipped upright again and grabbed for the ladder as they pulled away. It was one of the most daring bits of game flying I have ever seen.

Stinson, himself the leading aerial acrobat of Southwest army training fields during the war, is voucher for the fact that Short and Elliot had so perfectly synchronized their machines, nerves and confidence that they felt no fear in causing their planes practically to lock 1000 feet above the ground. Locklear, in his short career of thirteen months, flew with no other pilots than his two pals of Texas flying days. But he lasted long enough to cause a golden renaissance of the Flying Circus. If he were alive today, his stunts would still be a sensation.

He was killed in a night flight over Hollywood while engaged in making the last scene in a movie thriller in which he was the star. Movie fans who enjoyed having their hair pompadoured by the chills-and-fever flying of the hero of the Great Air Robbery are indebted to Locklear for that celluloid thrill. He was one movie star who required no double to play his dangerous rôles. Elliot was with him at the same time, and of that daring trio, there remains only Short, flying his lonely vigils on the night air routes.

A Boon to Flyers

Locklear's crash left me with many bookings at state fairs and it was up to me to get a substitute. You can get plenty of volunteers for any post provided it is dangerous enough. I signed up a young Y. M. C. A. athletic instructor named Tex McLaughlin. I first saw Tex in an Elks parade on Michigan Boulevard in Chicago. Tex wasn't marching with the Elks. He was twenty feet above them, hanging by one hand and chinning himself on the landing gear of an airplane. Anybody with nerve enough to do that had nerve enough for anything. Tex lasted six weeks after having evolved the idea of hanging upside down from a swinging rope ladder and changing planes while in this position. He performed this dazzling stunt twenty times and then made the single mistake which is allowed a man in the air.

That day Short gave the greatest exhibition of flying I have ever seen. The ladder was swinging from Short's plane and Tex was merely doing a preliminary stunt of standing on a lower plane and climbing the ladder to Short's machine. As he grasped the ladder the wind swung him against the propeller of the lower plane. He hooked his arm through the rungs, feebly motioning to Short that he was seriously injured. Short flew around in circles, leaning out of the fuselage to keep an eye on Tex, in the hope that Tex could climb into the car. But Tex was rapidly getting weaker and Short saw that he would have to land with a badly injured man dragging on a ladder beneath the machine.

The longer Short flew, the weaker Tex became. Finally, in desperation, Short headed the nose of the plane for the ground. By superskill, gliding and throttling his motor in an evolution known as pancaking, Short glided to the ground like an autumn leaf. The wheels of his landing gear touched lightly, the plane didn't run twenty feet over the ground, and Short was out of the fuselage in a minute, bending over the unfortunate Tex.

Although I ballyhooed that my circus flyers were contributing to science, I can look back and see that changing planes in mid-air didn't mean anything. It was a wonderful thing to look at—which let it out. However, a stunt by an eighty-two-pound girl forced the recognition of the parachute pack which is now one of the essentials in flying equipment.

In 1912, in San Francisco, Sky-High Irving made a parachute jump each day from a tractor biplane piloted by Roy Francis. Sky-High was an old-time hot-air balloon parachutist who never thought there was anything to the stunt except to thrill a crowd. He used an old-fashioned chute, which was carefully folded inside a huge tin cone fastened under the landing gear. Sky-High crouched alongside the chute on the landing gear. He made no pretense of adding to science. He was merely jumping for Mrs. Sky-High and the little Sky-Highs.

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He made the first public jump from an airplane and landed on the roof of the Tanforan grand stand in San Francisco.

I shillahered this feat so strongly that it was taken up by Charles Broadwick, who perfected a pack chute which was strapped on the wearer like a knapsack. It was made of silk, was very light and was released by a rip cord. He went around to the government aviation fields to market his invention but without success.

Broadwick then came to me and suggested that we give his parachute a trial. He had trained his daughter Tiny to jump from airplanes and she soon became a star in the Flying Circus. This little flapper thought nothing of stepping off the plank at an altitude of 5000 feet from Glenn Martin's plane. She climbed out onto the wing, stepped off backward, and as she was turning somersaults through the air, would tug at the rip cord. Rain or shine, storm or wind, she made a leap a day and forced the recognition of the parachute's value. Government aviators demanded that their planes be equipped with the Broadwick chute. It was another of the Flying Circus stunts which was shilled into something useful to the science of aviation.

A peculiar feature about great circus flyers is that none of them became war aces. This is easily explained when you recognize the value of trained flyers in instructing younger men to handle the sticks. Most of my hired hands did great work as civilian instructors and testers of motors and aircraft. The man who makes the first flight in a new plane deserves as much credit as the man who makes the last. Some stunt flyers ended their flying days on the ground by becoming designers and builders of reliable planes.

You could never tell which raw recruit was to become the next great feature flyer. I recall a gawky, gangling ground mechanic by the name of Shorty who tuned up planes for Col. Mickey McQuire and Katherine Stinson. Shorty used to sleep in a tent at night in order to guard Stinson's plane. But you could never induce Shorty to fly in one of those flimsy contraptions. It was his proud boast that he had never been up and never would go up. He was with me three years and left when the war began, enlisting in the ground aviation. We all knew that Shorty would be a faithful man and that no aviator would fall from a plane which Shorty had O.K.'d. But we were positive that Shorty would stay on the ground, as he had often said that he preferred heels on his shoes to wings on his shoulders.

After the Armistice, I was promoting an automobile race at the Cincinnati speedway. While talking to Colonel Vincent I felt a slap on my back and heard a voice say, "Well, how's Mr. Pickens?"

I turned around and saw a tall, erect officer in a major's uniform. I began stuttering, "Major, Major ——" in an effort to place him, and he said, "Don't you know me? I'm Shorty."

Then I realized that Shorty was Major Schroeder. The ground hog who preferred heels to wings had become the eagle who held the world's altitude record by ascending to almost 40,000 feet, adding a spectacular touch by falling about three miles with frozen eyeballs.

When Shorty did go off the ground he went off with both feet. It took a war to get him up and I guess it will take another war to bring him down.

Editor's Note—This is the fifth of a series of articles by Mr. Pickens. The sixth and last will appear in the issue of January 7th.

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