

# ACCELERATING SENTIMENT

By William Hickman Pickens

THE promoter who tries to fool a newspaperman lasts about as long as a paper umbrella in a rainstorm. Getting publicity is a difficult job, because all journalists are born skeptical and suffer from frequent relapses. If you claim anything in a newspaper office, the first things the reporters request are dates, facts and three reliable witnesses.

I have made many friendships in the newspaper game and these connections are based on square shooting. I never claimed anything I couldn't prove—if you gave me enough time. You might be able to swindle an editor out of free publicity once, but never twice; and having accomplished that, you had better keep on going. As my promotion compelled me to return at short intervals to every city in the country, it was up to me to establish credit with newspapers just as a business man would with a bank. I drew on them for publicity and my collateral was bona fide feature stuff that would make good reading.

Sometimes I would get a little too enthusiastic, as in the case of a mythical Japanese aeronaut who was to pilot a balloon in the international Chicago race, but I really intended hiring the services of a Nipponese cloud inspector and thought it all right to send in the matriculation papers first and locate the student afterward. When I couldn't find a Japanese pilot I had to think quick.

This taught me one thing: Don't shoot off your mouth unless you are prepared to hit the target with your teeth. After that I was cautious for a while, but my natural Southern optimism broke loose in 1914 and started scientists arguing all over the world. I tossed only a hopeful little pebble, but it caused a stone fight among the country's editorial writers.

## In Memory of Langley

IT STARTED while I was doing a little gentle tapping in the tap-rooms of the San Francisco hotels. There was a friend of mine who was a rather cynical hotel reporter, and though he had the greatest admiration for my imagination, he discounted all my statements 80 per cent. I was busy ballyhooing the Flying Circus, but couldn't get very far with my friend, because he figured that my flying heroes were a mob of tramps who should be working for a living. As a brother tapper, I thought that he should be more sympathetic, but never a line of publicity could I squeeze out of him. He was especially sore at my clown aviators because he had covered Langley's attempts to fly and had seen that great scientist crucified by ridicule. On Sunday nights my friend sat in for the city editor and I usually picked out Sunday nights to try to blast some newspaper space out of his paper.

But the minute I showed up in the office he would wave his hand toward the waste-paper basket, meaning that I should drop my story in the discard and save him the trouble. One Sunday I had steamed up a fine fantasy about Lincoln Beachey planning to make the first indoor flight.

When my reporter friend saw me he said, "Pickens, you're giving me granulated eyelids."

For some reason my press stories were poison to him and never did flash this one on him. Incidentally, Beachey did make an indoor flight later in the Palace of Machinery Building at the Panama-Pacific Exposition grounds. This building was 900 feet long and it was the boast of my trick flyers that they could fly off a postage

stamp and land on a post card. It was the only indoor flight I ever heard of.

I knew that the reporter would give me a Mexican cheer on the indoor-aviation stunt. Suddenly I got a bright idea about his sentimental memory of Langley and his pioneer experiments which had ended in such a tragic manner.

"I'm not here to take up your time talking about my aviators," I said to him. "I told Beachey what you said about aviators going to work and he's decided to do

of Beachey, the man who was to vindicate Langley, and set his memory right with the world.

Just a word about Professor Samuel Pierpont Langley. On May 6, 1896, his model plane, thirteen feet of wing spread, actually was propelled into the air by a catapult and flew. It was powered with a steam engine and dropped into the water when the engine went dead, the professor having neglected to send an engineer or even a fireman along with the plane. But, encouraged by this trial, the professor, backed by the War Department and \$50,000, constructed a machine of full size that would carry a man. The press and public were so derisive about Langley's plane, which was called an aerodrome, that Langley carried out all his preparations in secret.

The big attempt was made on October 7, 1903. The pilot was Charles W. Manley, and I'll say that he had more nerve than the man who first rode an elephant. Manley climbed into the machine, the catapult was wound up and somebody pressed the button. Instead of going up into the air, the aerodrome made a dive into the Potomac by the shortest and speediest route. The aerodrome carried Manley into the river and Langley's career went with the machine. The public hooted, even though such an eminent scientist as Nikola Tesla defended Langley staunchly to the end. Langley never flew, but his efforts proved that a heavier-than-air machine could fly. That's Langley's story.

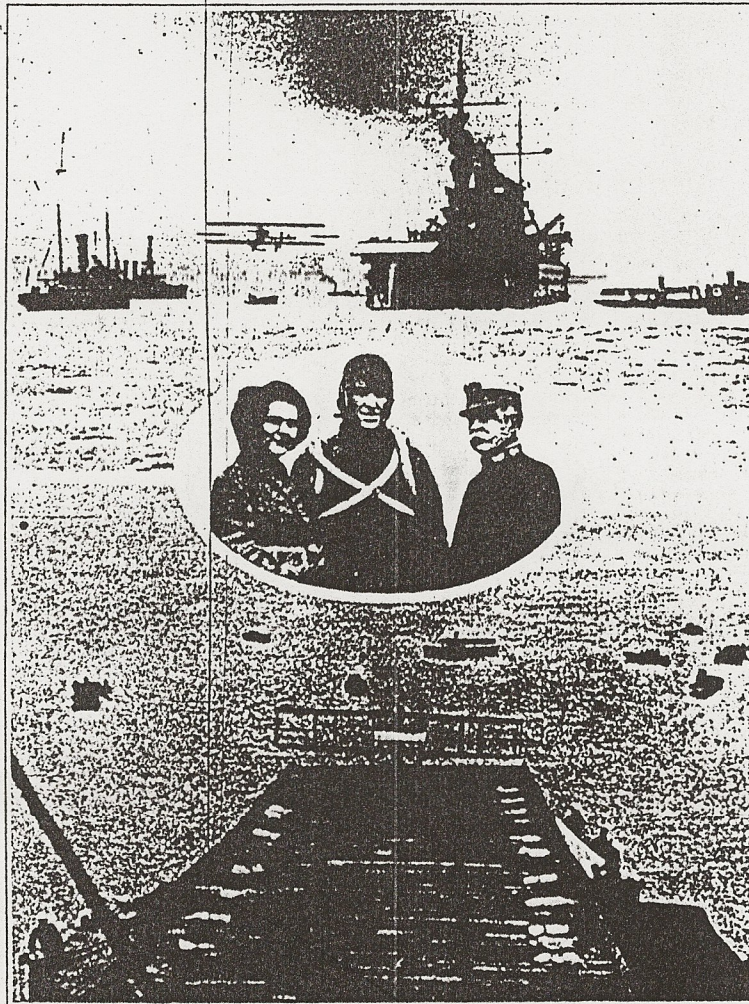
## A Much Delayed Wire

MY REPORTER friend wrote a beautiful article about Beachey, the Knight of the Air, who was going to rehabilitate the memory of a pioneer as only a man of truly chivalric impulses could. But like all newspapermen, he was exasperating. He wanted details. Just as I was sneaking out of the office, serenely content that my prize hen had laid a fine egg that day, he called, "Pickens, have you got a copy of that telegram to the Smithsonian Institution?"

That was an impertinent question for two reasons. First, I didn't have any copy of the telegram. Second, I didn't have a copy of the telegram because I hadn't sent any to the Smithsonian Institution. I told him that the copy was down in my office at the St. Francis Hotel, but that I would be glad to get it and bring it back to him. He seemed satisfied and expressed the story through. I hustled to the hotel and sent the much delayed wire to the Smithsonian Institution, got a copy and brought it back to him. The story was a sensation. It was relayed through the press, editorial writers chewed over the sentimental cud and praised Beachey for devoting his talent to the memory of Langley.

The heads of the Smithsonian Institution at first refused to allow the machine out of the building, and suggested that Beachey build a replica and experiment with that. But two weeks later they gave Beachey permission to fly the aerodrome. In the meantime I had Beachey out filling exhibition dates in the big cities and stalled for time. I asked for a postponement on the plea that they had refused a definite answer at a time when Beachey was free. Glenn Curtiss wired me, requesting that he be allowed to take Beachey's place in the aerodrome. I agreed and so did the authorities of the Smithsonian, and our share of the entertainment was over.

Curtiss took the aerodrome to his factory at Hammondsport, New York, installed a Curtiss motor in place of the clumsy steam engine and flew at Lake Keuka in the presence



REPRODUCED BY COURTESY OF THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE. COPYRIGHT BY THE CHRONICLE PUBLISHING CO.  
Eugene Ely in His Curtiss Biplane in 1911 Flew Over San Francisco and the Bay, Landed on the U. S. Cruiser Pennsylvania, and Flew Back to Land. The Upper Photograph Shows Him Leaving and the Lower Arriving on the Pennsylvania. In the Oval are Mr. and Mrs. Ely and Capt. Charles F. Pond of the Pennsylvania. Around Ely's Neck is a Life Preserving Arrangement for Use in Case He Met Disaster While Over the Water

something worth while. He thinks that you're right about Langley being the father of aviation and thinks that he can prove it. I've just wired the director of the Smithsonian Institution for permission to install a modern motor in the Langley plane now in the institute and fly it. Beachey is sure he can fly it and vindicate Langley."

That was the yeast cake that made the bread rise. He jumped up, stuck out his hand and said, "Pickens, now you're talking. Do you think Beachey can fly it?"

"Beachey can fly a kitchen table if you give him a big enough motor," I assured him.

My friend got all steamed up. I had touched him in a soft spot. He sent a copy boy to the "morgue" for pictures of Langley, Wright, Curtiss and Beachey. Then he put another man on the city desk and pounded out a story



ably army of photographers and newspapermen. The aerodrome was put back in the Smithsonian with a placard on it:

THE FIRST MAN-CARRYING AIRPLANE IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD CAPABLE OF SUSTAINED FLIGHT

This placard started another international controversy, with all the leading editorial writers choosing up sides against one another. As a matter of fact, the Langley plane wasn't flown until June 2, 1914, or more than eleven

He dug up a progressive young Oriental who had a two-dollar book on aviation and wasn't afraid of any man's camera.

The Sunday papers carried a picture of the world's only Chinese flyer. He was pictured at the wheel of his airplane, looking intently at nothing and with the peak of his cap reversed to the rear in real aviator style. It was one of the best flight photos ever taken in an armchair. The wheel which the Chinaman was clinging to so desperately had been ripped off a child's toy express wagon. There was no room on the walls of Chinatown for twenty-four-sheets, but I plastered the picture all over the Chinese quarter.

A month later the *Circus* was in Oakland and I had forgotten all about Oriental parachute jumpers, when in walked my Chinaman in an aviator's costume. He had taken some instruction at a flying school and had raised the money to buy an airplane. We gave him a few more lessons in flying and he was the star of our first Chinese Day in Oakland. This time he went on the twenty-four-sheets and the cream of Chinatown came out to see him fly.

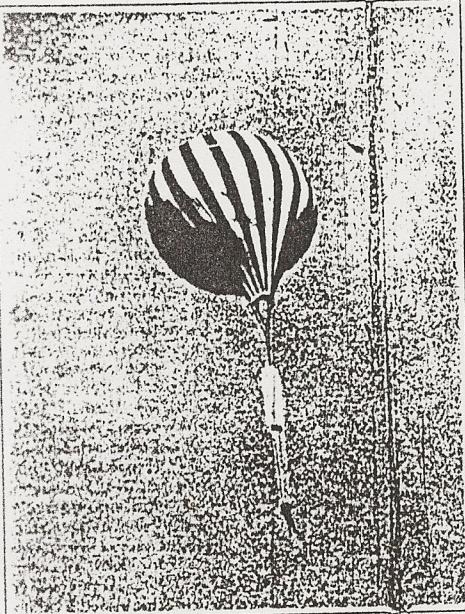
#### A Real Oriental Aviator

THERE was a big crowd present when he took off, but he wasn't nervous. The field was short, the grand stand was high, but he kept his nerve. He managed to get off the ground, swept by the stands, cleared a fence, hurdled a clump of trees, all without the least show of nervousness. His flying was still perfect as he tried to fly through the window of a big barn. I saw him in the hospital that night and asked him if he was nervous and he wiggled his little finger in the negative. All the rest of his body was covered with bandages. Just as soon as he could hobble, he raised the money for another airplane among his compatriots in California cities. He was a star of the Flying Circus for a year and then took his plane to China.

In the year 1918 a page boy in the St. Francis handed me this card:

TOM GUNN  
GENERAL DIRECTOR GOVERNMENT  
AERONAUTIC DEPT. OF KWONGTUNG  
CANTON, CHINA

When Tom showed me a check for \$1,000,000 which the new republic had empowered him to spend for aircraft, I realized it was time for Will H. Pickens to take lessons from his pupil.



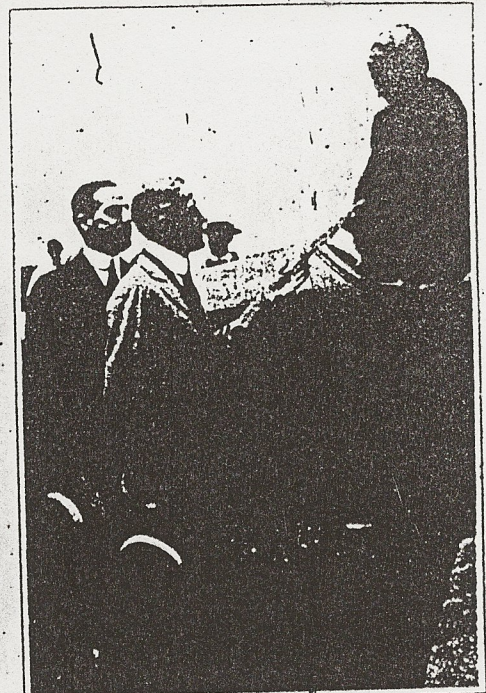
An Early Parachute Jumper

years after it was catapulted into the Potomac. In the meantime the Wrights had been flying for years.

All this ballyhoo was steamed up because Will H. Pickens required a quick answer for a substitute city editor who thought that Will H. Pickens was a publicity hound. I had told him that Reachey thought the Langley aerodrome could fly—and it did fly. And although it may stretch almost to the snapping point, a Pickens never breaks his word. I made good, even though my friend made me perspire like bacon in the pan. But I cured his granulated eyelids.

#### Nine Lives

I GOT so swelled up over this that I began to figure that my imagination had nine lives. So when I took the Flying Circus to Los Angeles I decided to ballyhoo a Race of All Nations. I had a Hindu, a Japanese, a Spanish and every other kind of pilot except a Chinese. They were no Chinese flyers anywhere in the world. So I went down to the Chinese telephone exchange and asked the manager if he knew of a Chinese lad who would pose for an aviation picture.



Katherine Stinson Carrying a Red Cross War Fund Report From Buffalo to Washington, 1917

I had no planes on hand to sell Tom, as, unfortunately, I hadn't visualized the possibility of one of my former pupils ever hobbling up with \$1,000,000 to invest in airplanes. He expended the money wisely and carefully, for he was an expert on engines and flying. Then he went back home to take his place among the progressive young mandarins. He was wealthy and influential when he died a year ago from an old injury sustained the afternoon that he tried to fly a forty-foot plane through a five-foot barn window.

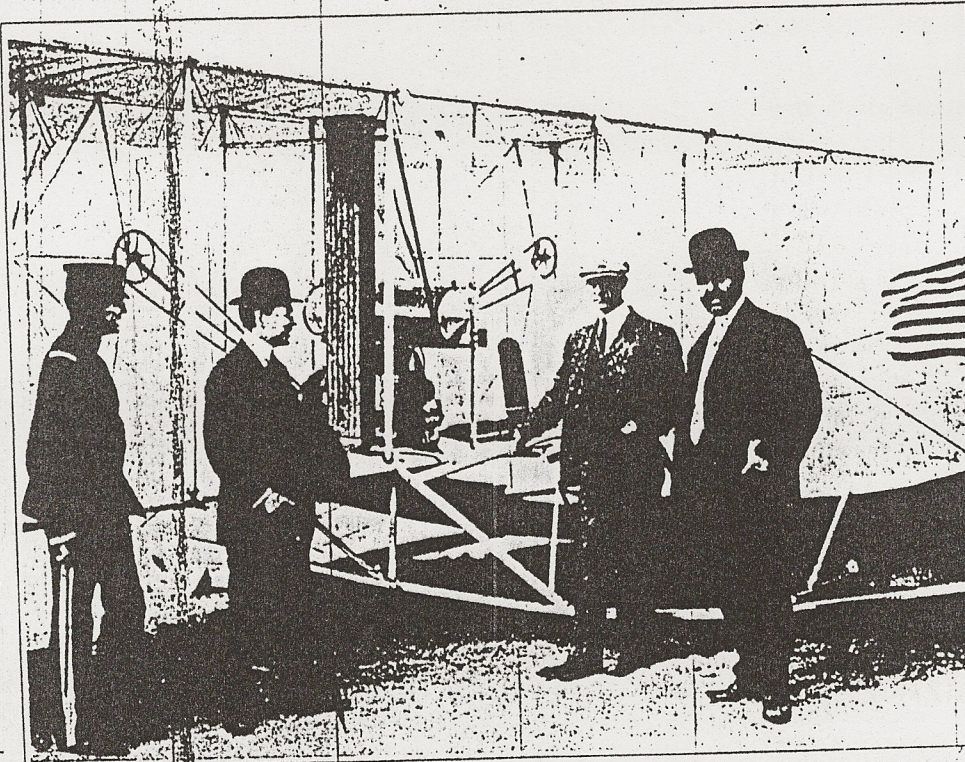
The world never heard of Tom Gunn, who was the Langley of China. He learned to fly in an armchair, clinging to the wheel of an express wagon, but made history before he was through. This is the first time that my name has ever been mentioned in the Langley tests, but it was my wild guess that started things that Sunday in San Francisco.

#### The Geyser

LIKE Old Faithful in Yellowstone Park, a promoter is a geyser that must spout every so often or choke. The Langley and Tom Gunn spoutings almost engulfed the spouter, but in the light of subsequent events, you must admit that I made good, even though it took years, and that truth crushed to earth shall rise again, even though it may be a trifle flattened out in the process.

Katherine Stinson's flying with ragshackle planes was far more meritorious than the stunts being accomplished today. She walked into my Chicago office early in

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Captain Doolittle, U. S. A.; Hon. James M. Beck, Former Solicitor General; Orville Wright, and Major William J. Hammer, Aeronautical Engineer, Looking Over the Wright Brothers' First Airplane



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out of the windows heaving phone books and spools of tape at you."

IV

THE first thing that Swift and I do when we get back from Missouri a week later is to call on Minnie Murphy for a show-down.

"She's probably out with some aviator," I remarks on the way to the house. "Anyone will do for that dame as long as he can fly. She likes her lads high."

"Miss Murphy in?" I asks the landlady.  
"In?" exclaims the old crone. "Haven't you heard?"  
"Heard what?" I comes back.  
"Minnie's married!" says she.  
"Yeh," says I calmly. "To whom?"  
"Harold Crane," is the reply.  
"Know an aviator named Crane?" I asks Joe.  
"Nope," returns the flyer.  
"He's no aviator," cuts in the landlady.  
"Mr. Crane's an engineer—a subway engineer."

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1913, a little slip of a girl with soft brown eyes and a Southern drawl. She told me she was an aviatrix and wanted a job with the Flying Circus. Her jet-black hair hung in curls down her back and she wasn't a day more than sixteen years old.

Although I had heard there was a girl named Stinson flying down around St. Louis, I couldn't believe that this frail miss could fly.

She looked too much of a risk to encourage Will H. Pickets to take the chance of losing a \$5000 plane just because a schoolgirl wanted to fly. To my amazement I learned that she had brought along her own plane, a cumbersome, unwieldy Wright pusher in which the pilot sat in front of the motors and propellers. She flew that afternoon and her handling of the controls gave me great confidence in her ability. So I added her to the Flying Circus and ballyhooed her as the Schoolgirl Who Outflies the Men.

She more than lived up to the ballyhoo, for in two years she was about the biggest drawing card in America and sought after in foreign countries. She was the first woman to loop the loop. She accomplished this in a machine designed by herself and built by Elmer Partridge in Chicago. The plane was powered by the Gnome rotary motor salvaged from Lincoln Beachey's ill-fated Taube which dived into San Francisco Bay.

Other aviators had flown at night with magnesium flares and looped in the sky, but on December 4, 1915, Katherine made a night flight from the aviation field in Griffith Park, Los Angeles, and wrote C A L in flaming letters 300 feet high against the blue velvet of a Western sky. This sky writing was an abbreviation of California and the only reason she limited herself to C A L was that she couldn't carry enough magnesium aloft to finish the word.

A Schoolma'am for Flyers

She held the records for distance and duration in air for both men and women when she flew from Chicago to Binghamton, New York, the distance of 601.763 miles being accomplished in ten hours and ten minutes. This record was made May 23, 1918, and was officially accepted by the Aero Club of America. Prior to this she had flown overland from North Island, San Diego, to the Presidio, San Francisco, on December 11, 1917. The distance was 610 miles and was made in nine hours and ten minutes. Both flights were nonstop. The Aero Club did not recognize the California flight for distance, because an overland trip between the two towns is longer than the air line, which is over water. In making this flight she was forced to ascend

8000 feet to clear the Tehachapi Mountains.

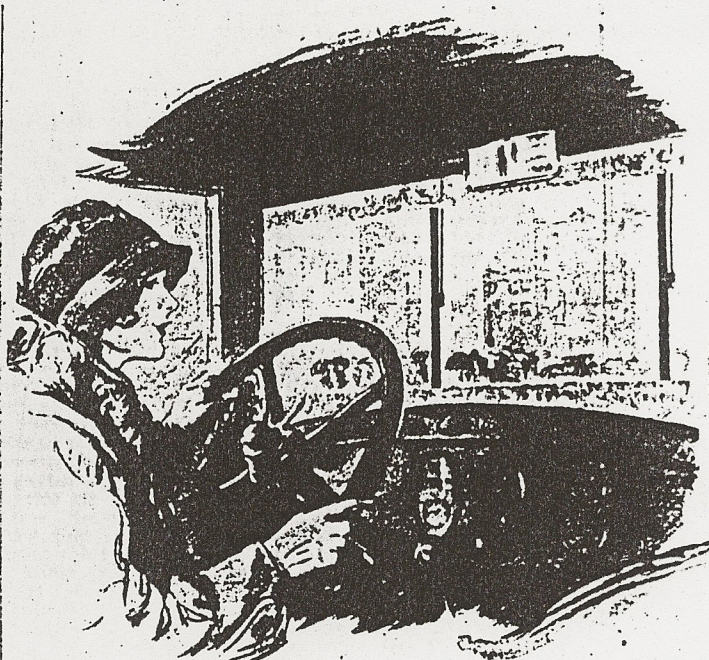
While playing dates at the Western Canadian fairs I arranged for Katherine to fly for the benefit of the Maple Leafs in the Canadian training camps. Later on she opened up a flying school in San Antonio and trained hundreds of flyers for the Allied armies. When the American punitive expedition went after Villa into Mexico she offered her services as a flyer. She didn't get the job, but had the consolation of knowing that many of the crack United States aviators were her pupils.

The First Sky Writer

She trained her younger sister Marjorie to fly and she made an aviator of her brother Eddie, who, by the way, is now reckoned among the great flyers of the day and is responsible for the Stinson-Detroit planes which made flight history in the summer of 1927. Her feats are so many that it is impossible to give more than a sketchy outline of a few. The most amazing, which is probably sky writing at night, is generally credited to an English captain who came over here and wrote ads in the sky with the aid of a chemical smoke in 1921. So, I guess, the best way to establish Katherine Stinson's claim is to quote the London Flight of March 2, 1916:

The feat was performed in Los Angeles. Using the sky as a background, she etched fantastic figures with her biplane studded with magnesium pyrotechnics. She traced the letters C A L in the sky, she looped, flew upside down and dropped in a mad tumble to within a hundred feet of earth, all the while being showered with the drippings from the burning lights on her biplane. . . . Thousands saw the aerial display, weird and beautiful, like a great invisible pen writing in molten fire on the curtain of night.

Which should just about clinch Miss Stinson's claim to having originated sky writing, as the London Flight printed this five years before sky writing became an advertising medium. But Katherine's greatest fame was earned in the Orient, flying in Japan and China, day and night, in 1917. The government of Japan was anxious to secure Beachey for exhibition flights, but his untimely death canceled the contracts. The business organizations and newspapers of Japan negotiated for the services of Miss Stinson, and upon the receipt of a \$25,000 guaranty, I sent her to the Orient. She launched a sensational night-and-day flying campaign over Tokio, Yokohama and other Japanese cities. It was a great boost for Oriental aviation, and government officials did not fail to impress the significance of aviation on future wars. Japan was startled into national preparedness by the wizardry of a slim Alabama



This twin-blade cleaner doubles your range of vision . . .

THESE two blades will change your whole idea of driving. Rain—snow—what do you care when your whole windshield is kept clear as crystal?

\$8.50

The new twin-blade Visionall with its powerful, noiseless suction motor—costs nothing to run. Not connected to your battery.

The two blades wipe straight across the windshield, each one cleaning its own half—with the steady speed that cleans to perfection. The cleared area is 25-4 square inches.



New 5-ply rubber blade.

Wipes to perfection—can't scratch—fits all windshield cleaners of suction type. We will mail one postpaid for 35c (U. S.), if your dealer can't supply you. DEALERS: The new Visionall and the new 5-ply blade are two items you should be selling. Write us.

The Visionall is easily, quickly installed, utilizing the same air line as your old cleaner. Price only \$8.50 in U. S. If your dealer can't supply you, we will mail one postpaid for \$8.50. Made by the world's largest manufacturers of windshield equipment.

TRICO VISIONALL

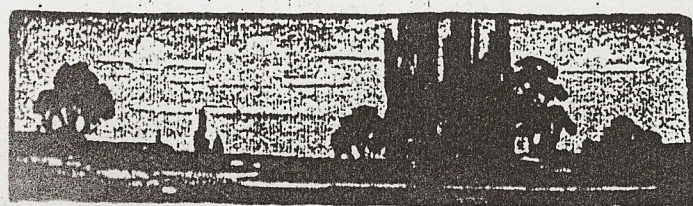
Automatic Windshield Cleaner

PATENTED U. S. A. AND PRINCIPAL FOREIGN COUNTRIES

TRICO PRODUCTS CORPORATION, BUFFALO, N. Y.

As advertised in The Saturday Evening Post, please send me one Trico Visionall with instructions for installing. I enclose draft or money order for \$8.50. I have written my dealer's name in the space at the left.

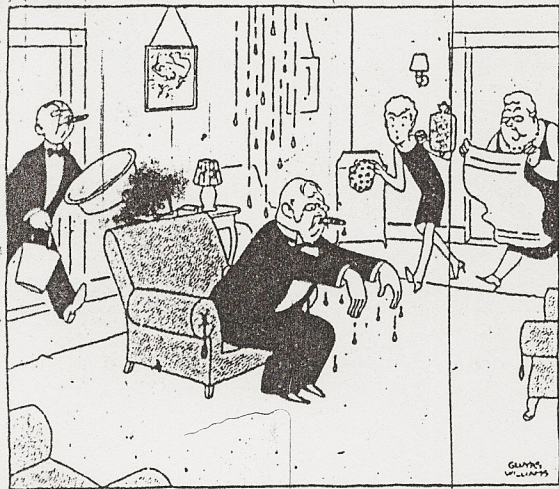
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_





# THE WALLOPS

[Number four of a series]



## Entertaining Distinguished Company

GEORGE and Clara Wallop had been entertaining the President of George's company, Amos P. Strance. Dinner was over. And then it happened.

Of course a pipe may leak in anyone's house, (unless they have brass pipes) but to have the shower bath descend on the important Mr. Strance was just too much.

"How dreadful," cried Mrs. Wallop. "Now wait just a minute and I'll get a bath towel and dry you off."

"And a bucket, too," shouted Mr. Wallop. "It looks as if it were going to keep up all night."

"That's the trouble with these pipes," complained Mr. Strance, wringing the water from his coat sleeve. "They rust and they leak. Ought to use Brass, Mr. Wallop. Can't rust or leak, and lasts forever. I put it in my own house twenty years ago and not a plumber's bill since. When your plumber comes tell him to replace that leaky pipe with a brass one."

"I guess you're right, Mr. Strance. But isn't brass pipe awfully expensive?"

"No, sir. The money you pay for plumbing repairs is more than the difference in cost between brass pipe and the cheapest pipe that's made."

"Is that so? I didn't know that. Well, from now on whenever we have to replace any pipe I'll put in a brass one," said George Wallop, looking at the dripping ceiling.

Mr. Strance is right. Alpha Brass Pipe can't rust or clog. There will be no rusty water and low water pressure in your house if you use it. Next time tell your plumber to replace with "Alpha".

For all brass pipes are not the same. Alpha Brass Pipe is different from ordinary brass pipe because it contains more copper and lead.

Although it is made from a better kind of brass and produced by a special process it is sold at competitive prices and is the only trademarked pipe of its kind. Plumbers prefer it because it cuts cleaner and sharper threads, making leak-proof joints. It positively cannot rust and the Alpha trade-mark, stamped every 12 inches, guarantees it for soundness and satisfaction.

Alpha Brass Pipe is not expensive either. For instance, in a \$20,000 house Alpha Brass Pipe costs only about a hundred dollars more than the cheapest iron or steel pipe.

## ALPHA BRASS PIPE

made from a special kind of  
CHASE BRASS

CHASE BRASS & COPPER CO., Inc., Waterbury, Conn.

girl's skill at the controls, and her stamp on modern aviation remains in that country today. Then she went to China, flying over Shanghai, Hankow and the Forbidden City of Peking.

Although one aviator at least had been flying in China for several years, millions of the Chinese had never seen an airplane. She was regarded with superstitious awe in Nanking and the Mongolians decided that her machine would not go up into the air. When it did leave the ground and swished its way into the clouds the Orientals thought that Katherine was a magician. They said, "That little thing in the sky is a bird. It is not the same thing that was on the ground. That was large and the thing in the sky is small. That little thing will never come back."

Miss Stinson gave a special night solo over the Peking palace of President Li Yuan-Hung and His Excellency displayed his appreciation by giving her a check for 6000 yen, equivalent to \$3000. As reports of her triumphal tour came back home I was using the good news to ballyhoo her all over America. On her return she was show-dome's greatest attraction and earned between \$4000 and \$5000 an afternoon at state fairs. Her biggest day was her exhibition flight at Sheepshead Bay in conjunction with the three-cornered automobile contest between Barney Oldfield, Ralph De Palma and Louis Chevrolet. Her take for that afternoon was \$7100.

Then the war broke loose and she never flew again for personal profit. Her last flying was done for the Red Cross, the most remarkable flight being from Buffalo to Washington, stops being made at all big cities and \$2,000,000 in checks being picked up and handed over to Secretary McAdoo. She designed and built all her own planes, bought her own motors, furnished her gasoline and never turned in an expense bill. She was refused permission to fly a combat plane, but went to England and flew from London to Paris and drove a Red Cross ambulance on the battle front. The result was an attack of flu, and since 1920 she has been living at Sante Fé, New Mexico, where her favorite diversion is entertaining transcontinental flyers who drop in for tea. Her career is proof of my frequent and raucous ballyhoo that the world's most intrepid aviator is a woman.

## Ballyhoo and Taboo

In spite of her daring, she was exceedingly careful. She flew at night and landed in half-mile race tracks, threading her way through trees, buildings and telegraph wires by the light of an old-fashioned bonfire made of barrels and hay--and never had a serious accident. As a promoter, I appreciated her technic and skill, because to me the only valuable aviator was a live one. I couldn't afford to make an aviator's name a household word unless I was reasonably certain that he would last long enough to pay dividends. The cost of such a ballyhoo is at least \$20,000 for advertising in trade and amusement journals, salaries of special publicity men and the printing of twenty-four-sheets. Some \$2000 is necessary for the purchase of enough photographs to flood the daily newspapers of America.

Although I was ballyhooing recklessness, I discouraged it among my flyers as much as possible. Miss Stinson first looped the loop and flew at night against my protests. I talked her out of looping for a year and told her she was doing well enough without extra stunts. One day she phoned me from the field that she had looped twice and told me to hustle out there if I wanted to see how it was done. After that there was nothing to do but to capitalize her ability.

Recklessness is a bad proposition as a business investment. The minute a flyer crashed I had to toss away at least \$10,000 worth of twenty-four-sheet lithographs and newspaper cuts in addition to a full line of printing including one-sheets, three-sheets, eight-sheets, smaller printing and stationery bearing the crest of the unfortunate

flyer. I absolutely refused to handle one of Art Smith's mechanics, who obtained one of Smith's old planes and inaugurated an orgy of wild flying on the west coast. He was the most startling flyer who ever took off from the ground. He would zoom between buildings and dip down within the framework of a roller coaster in an amusement park. He was another flyer who could fly off a doormat and land on a grease spot. He landed on the grease spot inside of six short weeks. He was an early example of the mechanic who became a flyer. Before his time, nearly every aviator was his own mechanic and did his emergency tinkering unaided. Therefore it was difficult to develop new flyers.

## Through a Needle's Eye

The early flyers were what crap shooters would describe as naturals. They were born birds who had pinfeathers on their elbows and needed only a short run to get off the ground. One of the best examples of a natural flyer was little Mickey McGuire, who was ground mechanic for De Lloyd Thompson and joined me to sell programs for Beachey's Flying Circus. He made a little money and disappeared one day, showing up in a month to inform me that he had a mail-order certificate as a flyer. I saw him fly a school plane and then signed him on for the Circus. He was a sensation for six months and I sent him out as a star attraction to the Arizona State Fair. His antics were observed by one of Villa's agents, who made a deal with him to purchase a half dozen secondhand planes and join Villa's army as a colonel.

Another aerial maniac was Sure-Shot Kearney, a product of the St. Louis school of flying. Sure-Shot gave himself that label after his folks had made the mistake of christening him Horace. He was a cheery lad, but he could fly. One of my ballyhoos for the Flying Circus had failed to materialize because of the illness of Glenn Martin. Glenn was to fly from the Emeryville race track in Oakland across the eight miles of San Francisco Bay and land in Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco. The object of the flight was to deliver a letter from Mayor Mott, of Oakland, to Mayor Rolph, of San Francisco, inviting him to step across the bay and see the show. The stunt was good for front-page stuff in all the papers in the bay cities and I wailed loud and long when Martin fell sick. Following the time-honored custom of the Pickens family, I was confiding my troubles to the head tapper in an Oakland taproom, when a young fellow hobbled up and said, "Mister, your troubles are over. I'll fly the bay on an ironing board."

The ironing-board aviator was a sturdy youngster with a good face and chilled-steel eyes. I had never seen him before, but I knew that he could fly. And I would have snatched at anybody just at that moment, because I had advertised a flight over eight miles of water and there were plenty of cub reporters ready to call me a fake. It was an astounding stunt, for Van Ness Avenue was lined on both sides with houses and crisscrossed with telegraph and telephone wires.

"Who are you?" I asked him. "Another one of those flyers who can take off a plate and land on a saucer?"

"I'm Sure-Shot Kearney." He smiled. "And I can do better than that. I can fly blindfolded over a transom and through the eye of a needle."

Sure-Shot Kearney was engaged on the spot. He was just out of the hospital at Bartelsville, Oklahoma, where he had lost a decision to a big oak tree, smashing up his ankle but saving his plane. The plane was down at the railroad office in four crates, where the officials were holding it for freightage. We went down and got the four crates out of hock and carted them to the aviation field. There were a lot of skeptical experts around who doubted anybody's ability to fly over eight miles of water and the indignant Sure-Shot wanted

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to make a preliminary flight to ease their minds. Sure-Shot's only precautions for the trip were to turn his cap around backward and wrap an inflated inner tube around his chest. Then he flew right into a front-page story in the San Francisco Chronicle, which said on February 16, 1912:

He made a direct line for Goat Island, where he swooped over to the sea wall and up to Van Ness Avenue, dropping slowly to an elevation of 500 feet at Van Ness Avenue and the beach. Dropping in a graceful sweep, he scooped under the telegraph wires at Francisco Street, struck the ground in the middle of the block and then running along the ground, swerved around the corner into the Lombard Street grade in a perfect stop. He delivered a message to Mayor Ralph and then flew out of Van Ness Avenue on a return flight to Oakland.

That flight made Sure-Shot among fellow aviators, for motors in those days were not built for sustained flights and few flyers cared to venture over water. Kearney was over the waters of the bay for only seven minutes, but his motor might have developed tonsillitis during one of those minutes and Sure-Shot would have been a dud. This flight enthused him to such an extent that he wanted to fly over the Pacific from Los Angeles to San Francisco—a daring proposition fifteen years ago. The distance approximated considerably more than 400 miles, and I talked him out of it, as I needed his services at country fairs.

But the idea kept simmering in Sure-Shot's mind and finally bubbled over ten months later. He built pontoons in place of his landing gear and announced he would fly on Saturday, December 14, 1912. He carried a passenger—Chester Lawrence, automobile editor of the Los Angeles Examiner, who was determined to go along in spite of the danger. The reconstructed job had some difficulty getting into the air off Huntington Beach. Then Sure-Shot got the plane's nose into the air and sailed over the city of Long Beach, where it dipped in a long swoop toward Santa Monica Bay. It looked as if the flight were over, but Sure-Shot made a good landing, plowed and bounded through the waves at fifty miles an hour and finally got aloft again, heading northward. Two hours later he was seen about a mile off Point Dume by a rancher named Lumken, who watched the plane until it was swallowed up in a sudden fog.

Lost at Sea

The gasoline launch Smiley, cruising off Redondo the next day, found a pontoon floating about five miles offshore. But nobody believed that the daring Sure-Shot had been lost at sea. Nothing more was heard for two days and I was accused of hiding Kearney and Lawrence on Santa Cruz Island off Santa Barbara. Their bodies were washed ashore five days later just a few miles south of Redondo Beach. They were the first flyers to be lost at sea, but fifteen years have not altered the spasmodic hopes and fears that blanket the world when modern Atlantic aviators are lost to sight over the ocean.

Sure-Shot went out the way he desired—in a blaze of publicity. It was his obsession that he might suffer the ignominious fate of crashing at a pumpkin fair or during a practice flight. All the early flyers knew that they couldn't last very long, but each endeavored to be known as the world's greatest aviator before he took the last dive. The pioneer flyers were young adventurers who chose the air more for romance than for money, and each one of them made a contribution to science. Sure-Shot's

bit was to prove that it was possible to radio from a flying machine to a ground station. Archie McDonald and Leo Scott, two Oakland High School boys, received Sure-Shot's Morse coding on their instruments in February, 1911, while Kearney was flying 300 feet overhead.

We had to do these stunts in order to get publicity, but there is no doubt that they helped to further the cause of aviation. When Silas Christofferson flew off the roof of the Multnomah Hotel in Portland, Oregon, it didn't prove anything except that it could be done. The hotel was in the heart of the town and Christofferson didn't know what would happen to him. But it had never been done before and that was enough for Silas. They assembled the plane on the roof and Christofferson climbed aboard. Ten men held the plane back while the engine gathered power, and at a signal all let go. The flight was successful enough to postpone Christofferson's finish for five years.

An Antidote for Old Age

Chamberlin got a lot of publicity recently by launching his airplane from a 114-foot runway built on the deck of the Leviathan. A young man named Eugene Ely did the same stunt on January 18, 1911. He not only flew off the cruiser Pennsylvania, anchored in San Francisco Bay, but he also flew onto it!

The only reason for doing this stunt was because Ely thought it could be accomplished. The Navy was just as eager to aid experiments in those days as it is now. Ely rose from the Tanforan race track and headed for the Pennsylvania. A platform had been built on the after deck of the big cruiser and Ely headed for it without the slightest hesitancy. His plane was equipped with grapples known as grass hooks, as planes didn't have tail skids in those days. Ropes, weighted down with sandbags, were stretched at short intervals across the landing platform. The grass hooks engaged these ropes as Ely swept over the platform and slowed him up. It called for great nerve, as Ely was seated out in front of his pusher-type Curtiss plane, but the last weighted rope stopped him.

Then he flew off. Aviation is just gathering the harvest from seeds planted fifteen and sixteen years ago. I must take issue with the editorials of August 31, 1927, which heralded the initiation of America's first airplane freight service on that date. The Chicago Evening American on May 25, 1912, announced that Farnum Fish had flown from Chicago to Milwaukee, carrying a 300-yard bolt of silk consigned to a Milwaukee firm.

After that, on Wednesday, May 29, 1912, Fish, who was known as the Flying Schoolboy, made the first delivery of newspapers by airplane when he distributed the Milwaukee Journal in Waukesha, Oconomowoc and Watertown. Fish was a sixteen-year-old boy who got the flying bug and wasn't happy unless he had both feet off the ground. Only his size kept the truant officers from rescuing him from my mercenary clutches. He weighed 190 pounds and stood six feet two. I kept him at the stationary age of sixteen for the next few years, even though it necessitated shaving him twice a day.

It is easy to see that the business of hallyhooping must be progressive. Each succeeding stunt must be more sensational and breezier than the one it replaced. Looping and honeymoon trips in the air were all right while they were novelties, but the news value soon wore off and we



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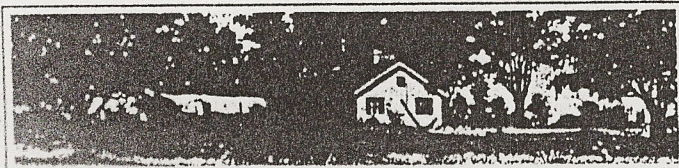
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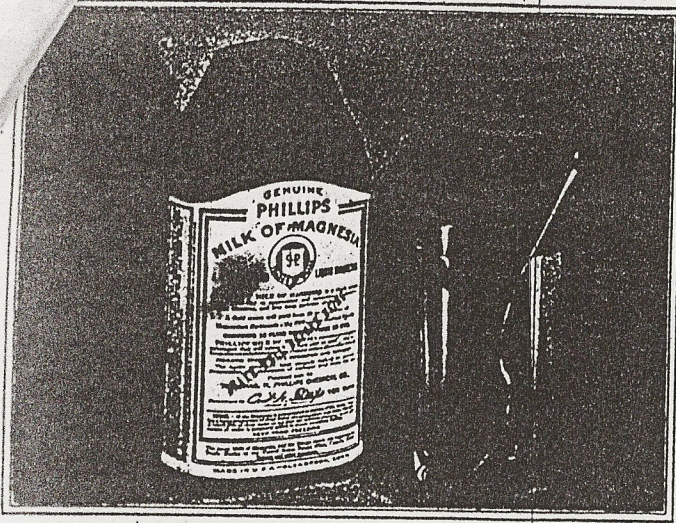
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Although Richards had had no experience along sales lines, he clipped a coupon like the one below, and became our representative in his locality. He could give only two hours a day to subscription work, or a total of 48 hours each month. Yet his profits totaled \$106.80 in one month, or approximately \$2.22 per hour. Money talks, and sometimes it makes pretty convincing conversation! You can listen to more like this, straight from your own pocket book, by representing *The Saturday Evening Post*, *The Ladies' Home Journal* and *The Country Gentleman* in your vicinity. Put your unproductive hours to profitable use without losing any time. Send this handy coupon for full details, TODAY!

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were forced to think up new features, and that's how another thing started.

We had a crew of hustlers selling souvenir post cards to the spectators assembled to see the Flying Circus at different fairs. These post cards cost us a cent each and sold for ten cents, a profit of almost the ideal 1000 per cent. One day we got the bright idea of accelerating sales by pasting a one-cent stamp on the cards and announcing that we would deliver them by airplane. The hustlers would go through the crowd selling the cards by the thousand, as people were eager to enjoy the honor of being the first ones to send mail by airplane. The postmasters fell right in with the scheme.

The procedure was for the postmaster of each town to come down to the field and swear in Farnum Fish before the admiring fans. Then his assistants would gather up the cards in regular mail bags and deposit them in Fish's airplane, who would then zoom up into the air and fly around until he spotted a vacant lot somewhere in the town. Here Fish would drop the mail bags overboard, where they lay until picked up by trucks. It was rather crude, but there is no doubt that we originated mail service when we first pulled the stunt in Oakland in 1911: This sale of post cards was worth \$1000 a day at state fairs and flying exhibitions.

### Auspices in the Foreground

It made a good hook-up with chambers of commerce and boards of trade, which urged all civic-minded citizens to boost their home towns by patronizing the aerial mail service. Everything was legitimate and we never told our customers that the overland flight of their mail was limited from the flying field to the first vacant lot in the vicinity. As a publicity stunt for the Flying Circus, it was the daddy of all ballyhoos. Newspapers seized on the idea and boldly predicted that some day the United States Government would fly the mail from coast to coast, but more conservative business men smiled at such rashness.

The value of this ballyhoo was in its dignity and government flavor. In order to get anywhere at all, a promoter must operate within the good graces of the civic or national authorities. He must have the confidence of the newspapers and a hook-up with the reliable commercial organizations of the various cities. All this is summed up in one word, "auspices." The promoter lurks in the background and rarely gives out statements to the press, for he should be operating under the auspices of the Downtown Merchants' Association or the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Gates Ajar

Society. The chairmen of these organizations are usually willing to serve as the mouthpiece for press interviews. You never have any trouble in finding somebody to ride the white horse.

Sometimes these promotions skid badly and the "auspices" find it necessary to soothe the feelings of indignant townsmen and friends. In that case your promoter is generally on his way out of town to dig up bigger and better "auspices" for his next attempt. His record is clean, for he has never been mentioned. His intentions are always of the best, even though the advertising methods of twenty-five years ago would be considered unethical today.

### Trade Customs

Manners and customs change in all trades, as a certain man discovered when haled into court in his home town a few years ago. He was the general utility man for a Southern company, and went into camp at Miami during the Spanish War. His commanding officer used to send the utility man out to do a little foraging. Any change of diet was delightful. The man became an adept at bayoneting chickens and shoats and was the most popular man with his company. He was the official forager.

The utility man stole so much livestock that he eventually came to believe that this was the orthodox method of getting a meal. His habits never changed when the troops disbanded and went back home, with the result that he often got into trouble with the police. Along about 1921 he was brought up before his old commander, now a judge. Charge, stealing a cow.

When the former utility man saw that the judge was his commander of the old days, he knew that everything was all right, for his commander had often praised him as being the best forager with the company. But that didn't help the former utility man any, for he got six months in the county chain gang. As he was being led away, he asked to be allowed to make a statement, and looking at the judge with reproachful eyes, asked, "Judge, how come it what wuz foragin' in 1898 is stealin' in 1921?"

And so it goes with the old-time ballyhoo. The successful promoter of today has changed the vinegar for honey and his harsh statements to suave propaganda. The Sons of the Great American Barnum have modified their shilling and booing, for the public is now able to detect the difference between the chaff and the wheat, and the ballyhooping of 1898 would simply be hokum in 1927.

Editor's Note—This is the third of a series of articles by Mr. Pickens. The fourth will appear in the issue of December tenth.

## SHORT TURNS AND ENCORES

(Continued from Page 26)

when the broadcaster describes a wicked punch.

The glee of the little ones on being allowed to stay up for the main event. They are permitted to be up until 10:30 on Christmas, Fourth of July, and fight nights. Evangeline, aged nine, is explaining with lovely patience to Phoebe, who is only six, what the one-two and the left jab are.

The satisfaction of father, at the dials. Father adds information to that given by the announcer, basing his comments on his recollections of the newspaper reports of the Corbett-Fitzsimmons affair thirty years ago. If father wouldn't insist on telling what he would do if he were in the champion's corner the audience would have a better time.

Mother beaming over the fine reception on the set, the Joneses and Smiths having been asked in to hear the returns and for lemonade.

Big brother's disgust over the proceedings as he passes out on his way to the nearest pool room, wondering what boxing is coming to anyway. — McCready Huston.

### A Holiday Acrostic

THEN

Today	bounteous hoard,
Home	ancestral farm;
Alluring	groaning board,
Now	cares disarm.
Kingly, the turkey	brown;
Savory	tantalize;
Grandmother	gown,
Intent	pies!
Viands	Ceres' shrine,
Inspire	gay;
Nuts, cider,	combine;
Give thanks	Nation's Holiday!

NOW

Two hit-run	crash;
Harvard and Yale	Bowl;
Arrest bobbed	dash;
Nebraska kicks	goal;
Kills rival	spre;
Services	unite;
Game	Station NSG;
Interest keen	fight;
Virginia punter	sphere;
Intoxicated	fray;
Nonstop	pioneer;
Give thanks	Nation's Holiday!

— Corinne Rockwell Swain.