

"Colonel Pope, I want to put the Pope-Toledo on the map. Will you give me a carload of Pope-Toledos at factory cost? You see, if you let me have them at cost, I can afford to give fifty away as advertising!"

Colonel Pope sat back and glowered at the brash youngster from Indianapolis. But Carl was armed beforehand. Before leaving Indianapolis, he had asked three leading citizens if they would guarantee his character if inquiries were made by Colonel Pope. Carl urged Pope to wire these men.

Colonel Pope was still thoughtful. "What did you say your name was?" The boy replied, "Carl Fisher." "Boy, you have more nerve than a government mule," was Pope's comment.

Finally he told him, "Come back in two days."

It was a thin hope, but Carl went back.

He returned to Indianapolis from Toledo with Pope's contract in his pocket. He went to the leading banker, one of the three who had given him a reference, and asked for a five-hundred-dollar loan in exchange for a ninety-day chattel mortgage on his bicycle shop. Two hundred and fifty of this Carl paid to his friend George Bumbaugh, the gaunt country boy who in a small shed in Indianapolis was designing, basting and stitching on an ancient sewing machine the balloon models he would eventually ride to fame from Speedway as "the world's greatest balloonist." But Speedway at this time was still only a vaguely outlined dream in the heart of a boy who loved bicycles.

Bumbaugh made Carl a thousand toy balloons, each tagged with a number and Carl's name. The rest of the money went into the first of the flamboyant full-page newspaper ads written and signed, Carl Graham Fisher. Carl announced that on a certain day the thousand balloons, one hundred of them carrying lucky numbers, would be released over Indianapolis. Finders of the balloons with the lucky numbers would receive brand-new Pope-Toledo bicycles.

For days the excitement held all Indiana, as men and boys ranged hill and fields popping away with every variety of fire-arms at the drifting balloons. From all over the state the lucky tags were brought in to Carl's shop. So unique was the stunt, so