

the sky. Brookins had landed his biplane in a field. He was there waiting when they caught up to him, smoking a cigarette, having set the world's altitude record at three thousand feet.

Few of us guessed the importance of this pioneer air meet. But to Carl it seemed tremendously important, in spite of the fact that it was a financial failure. To him the air held great promises. He was particularly interested in the youngster who appeared at the track with an airplane he had built himself—a young fellow named Lincoln Beachy. Carl liked him. There was no room in the two Speedway hangars for Beachy's home-built machine, so Carl put up a large tent on the track infield, and in this Beachy assembled his plane.

Each day during the airplane races Beachy made desperate attempts to make his plane fly. The last day of the exhibition came, and he had not been able to get off the ground. Carl knew the youngster was in financial difficulties, and he went to Beachy in the tent. "If you can only hop that kite of yours over those treetops," Carl said, pointing to the end of the Speedway track, "we'll put you in the money."

Everyone working on the field helped Beachy. The Wright's pilots tinkered with him on his machine, and helped him push his little plane out of the tent and down the runway. I think every person on the field breathed a prayer as the queer little plane lifted and lunged toward the trees. Then, triumphantly, it skimmed the treetops before it crashed, giving Lincoln Beachy the opening chance that would make him within a few years one of the greatest American fliers.

It was some time during the meet that Carl took his first airplane ride. I did not know he had made up his mind to fly, but I saw him directly after he landed. With all his experience in balloons, Carl had not taken easily to an aerial perch upheld by wings. It was Walter Brookins who had taken Carl up in his flimsy biplane and he had done his best to give the famous balloon and automobile racer the thrill of his life.

Carl had been airsick during the ride. He never flew again, to my knowledge. But airplanes became, and remained, one of his greatest enthusiasms.