

THE SAGA OF THE ROARING ROAD

Rickenbacker's glorious war record from that point on is too well-known to bear repetition here!

When Eddie returned from France, he was paid a tribute such as was bestowed upon no other war hero. With Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, presiding as toastmaster, and Major General Charles T. Monohar as principal speaker, more than 1,000 army and navy officers, governmental, civic and industrial leaders tendered him at a dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. To me fell the honor of escorting the guest of honor into the big dining-room, and of occupying a chair at his table.

Secretary Baker, General Monohar, three U. S. Senators, a Congressman and several other orators had tossed their oral bouquets at Rick. Then Secretary Baker called upon him.

Rising, Eddie pointed to a balcony box containing an elderly little woman, whose eyes beamed from behind gold-rimmed spectacles, whose reddish-brown hair was parted in the middle and waved in a quaint fashion of years ago, and whose black silk gown was trimmed at the throat with old white lace.

"My mother!" announced the King of the air, as his right hand snapped to his forehead in salute, in the same manner that he would have saluted the flag. And it was fine to see that the hand of Secretary Baker went to a salute, too, as did the hands of General Monohar, Henry Van Dyke, Congressman Clifford Ireland, of Illinois; Rick's fellow airmen—Major Jimmie Meisner, Capt. Douglass Campbell and Lieut. Paul Baer—and his former colleagues of the dirt and paved oval—Eddie Bald, Louis Chevrolet, Ralph De Palma, Barney Oldfield, Ray Harroun and Dario Resta.

Back in civilian attire, Eddie became vice-president

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and sales manager of the Rickenbacker Motor Company, building the Rickenbacker car—a post that forced him to give up active racing. But his interest in the sport of sports never waned for a moment, for he was elected president of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Association, a berth he still occupies, and later chairman of the Contest Board of the A.A.A., which makes him the real emperor of the motor tracks.

Rick's real business now, however, is the vice-presidency of North American Aviation, Inc.

He has earned all the better things life can bestow upon him!



Eddie Rickenbacker in one of the typical racing cars of the 1914 era.