CHARLES LINDBERGH
HIS LIFE

BY

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AND

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INTRODUCTION BY
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UNITED PRESS ASSOCIATIONS

NEW YORK ✦ ✦ LONDON
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
MCMXXVII

The source material upon which this account of Captain Lindbergh's career is based, was collected in the United States and Europe by the news organization of the United Press Associations.

INTRODUCTION

This narrative of the career of Charles Lindbergh is really the product of the extraordinary interest in his personality shown by millions of people.

Judged by the response felt from the readers of hundreds of newspapers, no single figure of our time has so caught the imagination of people everywhere. Newspapers around the world have found it impossible to tell too much about him.

His admirers were not content to read about his great flight. They wished to know how he became what he is to-day.

To meet this demand the United Press prepared a condensed life story of Captain Lindbergh which was published in its member newspapers. Material for this story was secured much the same as other news information would be secured through a world-wide news organization. Instructions were wired to every branch office in every city and town in the United States and abroad where Lindbergh or his immediate ancestors had resided or even visited.

Responses to this request poured into head-

quarters by wire, cable, wireless and air mail. Almost immediately there was assembled an amazing quantity of information concerning Lindbergh.

Scores of friends of the Lindbergh family were interviewed, many companions of Lindbergh's youth told what they remembered about him, official records and old newspaper files were examined—in fact almost every conceivable source of information was investigated by United Press representatives.

Far more material accumulated than had been anticipated. Lindbergh, as might have been expected, proved in the light of all this data to have had a thoroughly colorful and interesting career. One of the most interesting figures in the world to-day to the general public, he was in a sense equally interesting as a boy of ten when he used to sit on a bicycle seat attached in the top of a tree and dream of flying.

It seemed appropriate to bind together this mass of carefully collected material in some permanent form and this book is the result of this endeavor. The authors, members of the editorial staff of the United Press, assembled all the facts which were gathered as I have indicated and from them wrote the narrative account as it is set down in this story of Lindbergh's career.

Morris DeHaven Tracy and Dale Van Every, the

writers, have asked me to acknowledge the generous assistance and counsel of the following:

Robert J. Bender, General News Manager of the United Press; A. L. Bradford; Ralph Heinzen and John O'Brien of the Paris staff of the United Press; Carl D. Groat, William J. McEvoy and Joseph Wasney of the Washington staff; Louis Keemle and Lyle C. Wilson of the New York staff; Marben Graham of the Detroit staff; Webb Miller, Clifford Day, Keith Jones and Charles McCann of the London staff; Fred C. Othman of the Denver staff; Harry C. McCormick of the Lincoln staff; Kenneth G. Crawford of the St. Louis staff; and, in general, of practically every member of the United Press news organization which as a whole made this book a possibility.

They also wish to acknowledge the important aid rendered by Ernest J. Carlson of Little Falls, Minnesota, Myron V. Depew of the San Diego *Sun*, T. L. Greenfield of Butte, Montana, and J. C. Oslin of the San Antonio *News*.

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CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

CHARLES LINDBERGH
HIS LIFE

CHAPTER ONE

THE BOY AND THE MAN

LATE in the day, May 21, 1927, two continents found themselves proclaiming as a new hero a tall, blond youth of twenty-five years whose feat of flying alone and almost entirely unaided by airplane from Curtiss Field, near New York City, to Le Bourget Field, near Paris, had drawn more heavily upon the popular imagination than the accomplishments of any other peace-time hero.

The lad was Charles A. Lindbergh, and although he was known among aviators as a daring and experienced flier, the public was almost entirely unacquainted with him. Until some weeks before he was virtually unheard of. Then newspapers began printing brief paragraphs saying that this youth was at San Diego, California, with an airplane, not only ready to fly from New York to Paris, but that he proposed to fly first from San Diego to

New York. It seemed like a fanciful project and, by most of those who read of it, was passed off with a skeptical smile.

The public began to take more notice, however, when it learned that this young man had flown from San Diego to St. Louis, Missouri, without a stop, the longest flight ever made by a lone aviator. When, the following day, he arrived in New York and, smiling and blushing, stepped from the cockpit of his monoplane at Curtiss Field to accept the applause of the comparative handful of people gathered there, he was fairly launched on the most sensational ascent to the pedestal of popular acclaim that any civilian had ever made.

There was something in his bashful manner, his boyishness, his nonchalance, and his utter failure to indicate that he had any realization of the moment of the thing he had accomplished or the thing he proposed to do, which appealed to the popular imagination.

Then came days of waiting, during which Lindbergh lived his own life, seeming almost careless in the face of what every one con-

sidered as solemn a venture as was ever undertaken in the name of sport, of science, of exploration or whatever name may be applied to the thing which he has done. By May 19 there were many who were feeling that here was an altogether lovable youth who was about to sacrifice himself in a foolhardy flight. There was considerable pity and not a little open skepticism. There were even those who dared give voice, although perhaps not a very loud voice, to a belief that there was little intent upon the part of this youth to fly to Paris but that eventually he would give up, having made a gesture which had brought him wide attention.

Then with a simplicity and lack of *furore* which was in itself amazing, on the morning of May 20 he climbed into the silver-gray airplane which has won, along with Lindbergh, a place in the Hall of Popular Fame, bade a sobering good-by to a few friends, and was away, heading due east.

There, perhaps, is the symbolic keynote of the success of this bashful boy from Minnesota.

When he left San Diego, California, he headed the nose of his airplane into the east and never changed direction until he landed on the field in St. Louis. The next day he was again winging eastward to New York. The morning he left Roosevelt Field, Long Island, New York, he could choose two directions for the long run his heavily loaded airplane required in order to leave the ground. He could fly to the east and if he failed to rise, ahead of him was the danger of crashing into fences, wires, trees and houses. He could head to the west and have long stretches of open ground before him, meaning comparative safety. He chose to point his plane once more to the east and from the moment it left the ground until he reached Paris and his goal, he held to that direction with never a change.

Perhaps Lindbergh did not realize what he was doing but it was both typical and symbolic of his entire life. Courage made possible the flight, combined with great skill. But, when one searches back to the boyhood of Charles Lindbergh and follows him through the suc-

cessive stages of his development, there stands out one other characteristic which dominates all others, namely, that his entire life had direction. He always had pointed one way, just as he pointed his plane forever towards the east and in his life as in his flight, he never for a moment deviated from that course, regardless of obstacles, once he was fairly out upon it.

The result has been that at the age of twenty-five years, when most men are marking only the first, unclear, outlines of their careers, this youth has achieved a position which at this moment would seem certain to be the absolute climax of his life.

If Charles Lindbergh, in the future, surpasses the glories he already has attained in this year, 1927, it would seem that future generations would look back upon him as one of the immortals.

If there is a lesson found in the story of his career, it is a lesson which teaches first the value of a definite objective and then emphasizes that the objective alone is not enough. For his achievement Lindbergh had to support

his purpose with unflinching courage, with great confidence, with simplicity of thought and action without which he never could have attained the plaudits of the nations which have come to him, and with a painstaking thoroughness which sometimes seemed to carry almost to the ludicrous, as, for instance, when before embarking on his flight he carefully provided himself with transportation home from France and with letters of introduction to men in Paris, in order that he might not be lonesome after his arrival. Added to all those qualities was the power of concentration and the qualities of a dreamer who could dream and then make his dreams come true.

A man whose personality is built of such stuff might easily be considered a genius in the sense of one set apart from his fellows and almost preördained to accomplish one thing to the exclusion of all else. Then, when one considers that from earliest childhood Lindbergh was a person who preferred to play a lone hand, be it at sailing toy parachutes or flying the Atlantic, the urge increases to look for

some peculiar personality, in the form of a youth keeping always to himself, constantly working, perhaps without humor, and certainly without close friends.

Such a search brings out only an opposing characteristic of this complex individual. It reveals that when problems are large Lindbergh draws within himself and perfers to face and to solve them alone, if he can. But he seeks his moments of relaxation when he becomes a laughing, gay youth among his fellows. He has an almost cruel habit of playing practical jokes. He delights in the good-natured bringing of minor discomfiture to his associates. Like most healthy youths he is an inveterate raider of the ice box. He has a healthy appetite. He has a fondness for sweets which seems entirely out of line from the serious concentration of his more sober side. The places where he has lived first record him as a serious, purposeful person, but when the searcher goes beneath the surface he finds a wealth of amusing anecdotes and of personal characteristics which prove that Lind-

bergh differs little from other young men of twenty-five and has differed little from others of his age throughout the successive stages of his life.

When taken as a whole the picture of the life of Lindbergh banishes the idea which has at least threatened to gain wide credit that he might be called a superman or a man not of the same clay as other mortals. Charles Lindbergh is thoroughly a human being, with frailties as well as strength, and it is because of that fact that he is interesting.

Perhaps before the reader goes on into the story of how this remarkable man developed from an ordinary boy of a small, Minnesota town into a hero acclaimed by two continents, it would be well to know something of his personal appearance.

Lindbergh is tall and slender. He stands over six feet in height and weighs less than 200 pounds. He looks to weigh even less than he does for his build is muscular. His complexion is fair, an inheritance from his Swedish ancestors. His light, luxuriant hair is at

the same time one of his outstanding characteristics and reportedly one of his greatest aversions. Friends say that he fears his curly hair, if there is anything in the world he fears. They tell that he wets it and tries all manner of methods in an attempt to render it inconspicuous. There is even a story, well vouched for, that on days when the weather is damp Lindbergh is the most apt to be ill-natured for on such days his hair is likely to become unruly. His ready smile is friendly and animated. It gives the impression that he feels the world a pleasant place in which to live and that he has faith in the good intentions of his fellow men.

Until comparatively recent years, according to those who know or knew him best, Lindbergh cared little for his personal appearance. His favorite costume was a pair of overalls and in his high-school days he was classed among those boys who "never spruced up" by at least one fellow student. But when he was ready to fly to Paris, an immaculate attire, although it usually consisted of aviation costume, was one of his most noticeable points. Regard-

less of how long he worked over his plane or how far he flew, he never seemed to accumulate the grime which usually is expected to cling to those whose lives are closely linked with machines.

His personal habits are conservative. He neither smokes nor uses liquor. He reads much but usually on technical subjects, politics or history. Apparently he cares little for fiction. He does not dance. If there has been romance in his life, the object of his affections has been endowed with the same simple modesty and ability to shrink away from publicity that kept Lindbergh himself obscure through years when he was performing feats of aviation which might have won him wide attention.

Such is a brief outline of the type of man who performed a feat which brought thousands and even millions to his feet in admiration and then, while the rulers of the Old World praised him and the people of the New World begged for the chance to pay him their tribute, carried his honors with a charming modesty mixed with tact which appeared an accomplishment

as great as the one he had achieved in the air.

Thus it becomes a matter of interest to begin with Charles Lindbergh's forebears, trace down through the generations the development of the qualities which seem concentrated in him and from the marshaling of the facts, the episodes, the anecdotes and the incidents of his life, see what it was that went into the making of this man.

When the entire story is told one seems amazed to look back and find that here is no demigod but merely an American boy, made of a composite of races similar to most native Americans, whose life in boyhood was only a little different from that of most American boys of the Middle West, and who had neither fortune nor abnormal genius to open the way for him.

But he had the fortune to develop early in life, a definite purpose; he was endowed with the qualities to support that purpose; and now while still a youth, he has brought his dreams to realization.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LINDBERGH FAMILY

SELDOM is it possible to trace with such clear outline the characteristics of a given person back through his ancestry, as it seems to be in the case of Charles A. Lindbergh. His physical and moral courage, his ability and desire to make his own decisions, his preference to work alone whenever the problem and the responsibility are the greatest, his modesty and simplicity, his instinct to pioneer and to experiment with that which is new, each finds to an unusual degree a counterpart among his somewhat immediate forebears.

On his father's side there seems to be a well defined line of physical endurance, daring and of courage. From that side of his house he also seems to draw his complete self-reliance and the ability to do his most effective work while alone and not under the guidance or accepting the assistance of others.

From the maternal side would seem to come the experimental urge so dominant with him, the instinct to try something that has never been done before, and his simplicity, modesty and tact.

In Lindbergh these native qualities of those who went before him seem to have been concentrated to a high degree or else to have been given unusual opportunity for expression.

Lindbergh's father was Charles A. Lindbergh, Sr., a former member of Congress from Minnesota and before that a practicing attorney who had met with moderate success in the town of Little Falls, Minnesota. His mother is Evangeline Lodge Lindbergh, daughter of Dr. C. H. Land, a dentist of Detroit.

His grandfather had come to this country from Sweden in 1860 when Lindbergh's father was but a child. The family had gone to Sauk Center, Minnesota, and there the elder Lindbergh had set himself to the task of winning a home from the then comparative wilderness. In Sweden he had been a man of some prominence. He had served in a branch of the

Swedish parliament and at one time had been a King's Secretary. But he had heard the call of the New World and, like many of his blood, had answered it and moved to Minnesota, hoping that this country would yield to him greater fortunes than the more rigorous land of his birth.

The family lived the typical life of the pioneers. The elder Lindbergh, with ax and saw, cut the trees and built a log cabin home. It was a tiny place, measuring some twelve by sixteen feet, but it served as a beginning.

In connection with those early days of the Lindbergh family in the United States, the Rev. C. S. Harrison, in the printed reports of the Minnesota Historical Society, relates an incident which seems typical of the steadfast courage and the adherence to purpose which appears a part of the younger Lindbergh.

"In 1861 I was living in Sauk Center," Mr. Harrison said, "where I preached the first sermon. About ten miles from the city there was a sturdy Swede who took up a pre-

emption and built a little log house, twelve by sixteen feet.

"One day he took a load of logs to the mill and, stumbling, fell on the saw. This caught him in the back and also took a stab at his right arm.

"It was hot weather and there was no surgeon within fifty miles. I followed him to his home and we did not think that he could live. I picked out the sawdust and rags from his wound and kept the mangled arm wrapped in cold water.

"Obtaining a horse from a neighbor and a man to ride him, I sent for the doctor. Though it took the doctor three days to get there we had kept the patient with such care that his cleanly habits and robust constitution carried him through the operation successfully. I helped the doctor and we took off the arm near his shoulder.

"But the next December, the old hero was out chopping rails with his left hand."

Eventually the family left the little preemption claim near Sauk Center and moved

to a home near Melrose, Minnesota. It was there that the aviator's father spent the greater part of his boyhood. He passed most of his time hunting, fishing and roaming the woods, as his own son later was destined to do. There was little offered in the way of common schools and his early education came largely from reading, from study at home, and now and then a short term at the country schools. When twenty-one years old he entered Grove Lake Academy, Minnesota, and later the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. At the University he studied law and in 1887 was graduated as a bachelor of law.

Finishing college he returned to Minnesota and began the practice of his profession. His early career was not unlike that of any other young lawyer of the smaller communities. But gradually he became known as a fearless fighter and his practice led him to moderate prosperity.

In 1907 he rode into Congress as a strong supporter of the then President Roosevelt. It was at the height of the campaign against the

trusts and Lindbergh's support of that program had much to do with his election. In Congress he proved to be a tireless worker and a spirited antagonist of whatever he considered reactionary or wrong in principle. He felt many phases of the financial system were wrong in their conception and he studied finance and fought vigorously for and against much banking and financial legislation.

But the characteristic of the father which first is recognizable in the son was his ability to concentrate, his policy of playing a lone hand, and his tirelessness as a worker. Associates tell how Congressman Lindbergh found that in Washington the days are taken up with many callers, with committee meetings and with countless appointments all of which must be kept though he found many of them irksome. The day left him little time for the serious work which he desired to do. But he was a man who could live comfortably with but little sleep and soon he adopted the policy of going to his office at 5 A.M.

"It gives me the four hours from five until

nine o'clock to work undisturbed," friends said he told them.

Young Charles Lindbergh has the same faculty. When there is work to do, sleep has but small place in his daily program. He is up early and at work and midnight often finds him still at his labors and apparently suffering no ill effects.

A story is told of Congressman Lindbergh, illustrative of the strain of fortitude which seems to have passed down from father to son in this family.

He was suffering from an illness which the physicians said would require an abdominal operation to relieve. The congressman protested that the requirements his work made upon his time would not permit it. The physicians insisted, and finally Lindbergh consented. But he refused an anæsthetic. Instead he invited an associate with whom he had political questions to discuss, to come to the operating room with him. While the surgeons worked upon him, Lindbergh sat discussing business and political affairs with his

friend and at the conclusion of the operation offered profound apologies for having caused his companion the discomfort of watching a none too pleasant process.

Lindbergh served in Congress from 1907 until 1916. During all that time his course was the same. He fought as an insurgent on every question in which the matter of insurgency became an issue. Hardly had he entered Congress than he joined in the fight which unseated Joseph G. (Uncle Joe) Cannon from the speakership and forced the revision of the rules.

But in 1916 Lindbergh was defeated for reelection. He remained in Little Falls and two years later became the candidate of the Non-Partisan League for Governor. It was a hard-fought campaign. The attacks upon him were violent. Feeling ran high. But at no time did he refuse to meet the situation. At times, newspapers of the day would indicate, he appeared in danger of physical violence. He was defeated by a close margin and again

retired to Little Falls and his private law practice.

In 1923 he sought election once more to the Governorship. This time he found his son, Charles, had advanced to a point where he was a skilled aviator. Charles carried his father frequently by airplane from town to town where he was to speak and to meet the voters. In that manner he was able to prosecute his campaign throughout the state with remarkable thoroughness. But again he was defeated.

In 1924 Congressman Lindbergh died and Charles, then flying in the West, came home by air and from his airplane scattered the ashes of his father over the farm where his boyhood had been spent.

Evangeline Lodge Lindbergh, mother of the aviator, comes from a long line which traces its blood back to England into the days of Richard the Lion Hearted and the Crusades. Her father was Dr. C. H. Land, a dentist of Detroit. His father was a native of Ontario, Canada, and his grandfather was Col. John Land, a native of Suffolk, England, and a

founder of the present city of Hamilton, Ontario.

Fancy can easily trace the beginnings from which Lindbergh developed his flight to Paris, back to the dentist's office of Dr. C. H. Land, his maternal grandfather, in Detroit. Dr. Land was born in Ontario but was raised and educated in Brooklyn, N. Y., and studied dentistry under Dr. J. B. Meacham, at Brantford, Ontario. After a short period devoted to practice of dentistry in Chicago he moved to Detroit where the family became established.

Dr. Land was more than a dentist. He was a constant experimenter and an inventor. Just how well defined is the experimental turn which is part of Lindbergh's inheritance, can be seen from the fact that in his Detroit office Dr. Land perfected a process of using porcelain for filling teeth, invented a gold inlay system and developed other revolutionary dental methods. As early as 1875 and as late as 1911 he wrote papers on dentistry which still are recognized in the profession. But dentistry

was not the only thing to which Dr. Land turned his inventive genius. He perfected and patented such things as incandescent grates for furnaces, gas and oil burners.

"His gas jets never have been bettered," his daughter, who is Lindbergh's mother, was quoted as saying in a recent interview.

Dr. Land was exceedingly fond of his grandson and extended to him the particular privilege of visiting his dental offices and permitting him to give that youthful "help," the value of which any mother of such a child can well appreciate, as he himself went on with his researches.

"Undoubtedly Charles first became fascinated with machinery in my father's office," Mrs. Lindbergh said in the same interview quoted above. "My father had a suite full of curious appliances, wheels, pulleys, belts, levers, and such things. He used to take Charles with him to his office and Charles would spend hours there, watching and tinkering with the machines."

It would seem possible that in those days

when the boy was playing among the wonders of this dentist's office and experimenter's laboratory, that the natural inclination towards mechanics and experimentation, which has served him already so well as one of the bases of his Paris flight, was given its decisive stimulus. With such a heritage and foundation, it was perhaps but natural that Charles Lindbergh turned to motor cycles, then built a motor-driven iceboat, took up airplanes after automobiles had lost their thrill, and, when he had exhausted everything else in the flying profession, decided to fly to Paris.

There was another quality which seems to have come down from the maternal side of the house. That is the quality of modesty and of tact, but the very presence of those characteristics in the family makes them difficult to trace, for they seem quite strongly defined in Lindbergh's mother.

"He takes some of the possibly more deep-seated instincts from his father," seems a typical quotation from Mrs. Lindbergh's few interviews since her son flew into fame.

"I have learned many lessons from my boy," she said on another occasion.

"All the credit is due to my boy and I don't want to take it from him," Mrs. Lindbergh is recorded as having answered reporters who besieged her to tell them how it was that she had reared Charlie until he had attained his present heights.

Again it was perhaps typical of the family that during those thirty-four long hours when Lindbergh was flying to Paris, his eventual fate uncertain to every one excepting, apparently, himself, his mother went about her usual day's routine, teaching a chemistry class in Cass Technical High School, Detroit.

CHAPTER THREE

BOYHOOD

THE quality of self-reliance showed itself early in the life of Lindbergh. Perhaps it is best illustrated by an incident which occurred when he was but five years of age.

He and his father were on one of the excursions into the woods, a mile or more away from the Lindbergh home at Little Falls, Minnesota, which had become a custom with them. The father, however, wished to go deeper into the woods and he feared that his boy of five might tire, so left him beside the trail.

"You stay there for a few minutes," the older Lindbergh is said to have told him. "I'm going on a bit and will come back pretty soon and meet you here."

But when the father returned the boy was gone. The elder Lindbergh searched through the woods but could find no trace of his son. Frightened and picturing all sorts of misfor-

tunes befalling the boy, Lindbergh hurried home, intending to enlist the aid of neighbors and begin a wide search. But five-year-old Charlie greeted him at the gate.

"How did you get here?" Lindbergh asked his son.

"When we were walking you told me that the sun always goes down in the west and we were walking straight at the sun," Charles is reported to have replied. "I got tired of waiting, so I just walked straight from the sun and I came right home here."

Not only was the child certain that he could find his home without the aid of his father but apparently he already had developed to a degree that unusual sense of direction which, reenforced only by a compass, enabled him to fly a course across the Atlantic as straight as the flight of a homing pigeon.

Lindbergh was born February 4, 1902, in Detroit, Michigan. When he was a month old his mother took him back to the Lindbergh home in Little Falls, Minnesota. There the family lived on a farm on the west bank of the

Mississippi River just south of the city limits of the town. It was a farm of remarkable beauty. The house was a comfortable, one-story white structure, with spacious basement, located on sloping ground, surrounded with trees and with woods and the river near by.

From earliest childhood Charlie was the closest companion of his father and there was a remarkable similarity of taste between them. They both enjoyed out-of-door life. As soon as Charlie was old enough his father began taking him on excursions into the near-by woods. As he grew older the length of these excursions increased. A gun and a fish rod were added to the equipment and finally day-long journeys became frequent with the father and son apparently happy in each other's company.

When Charles was but ten years of age he and his father spent a summer paddling in a canoe from the headwaters of the Mississippi to its mouth.

Charles was aged five years when in 1907 his father was first elected to Congress and the

family moved to Washington where a part of each year thereafter was spent for the next ten years. The Lindberghs lived near the White House and young Charlie became a member of that famous gang of Washington youngsters headed and allegedly inspired by Quentin Roosevelt, youngest son of the then President. He played much on the White House grounds and is said to have had a part in some of the happenings which made the White House so lively a place in those days.

When Quentin Roosevelt rode his once-familiar pony into the White House and browbeat an attendant into giving it a ride on an elevator—an incident the President never tired of recalling—Charlie Lindbergh is said to have been one of the gang which was egging Quentin on. He is also credited with having had a part in the cutting of light wires, thereby plunging the White House in darkness on one famous occasion.

F. C. Henry, a Washington druggist, recalls that Charlie Lindbergh was one of the many small boys of the neighborhood who, with

Quentin Roosevelt, bought their sundaes at his drug store.

"They were no better and no worse than most any other good, live American boys," Henry said recently. "They played many of their pranks on me, but it was healthy mischief."

Young Lindbergh was a frequent visitor to his father's office in Washington and there he became acquainted with many of the leading men in public life at that time. He was reputed to be able to call most of them by name and most of them would return the salutation in kind.

In school he was quiet, unassuming and modest. It is recorded that he cared but little for English, composition or such subjects but was much interested in science, in mathematics and in that last named subject was always among the leaders of his class.

His teacher, Miss Elizabeth E. Marshall, described him as a quiet, unassuming, yet distinctly individual sort of lad. But because of his quiet manner and his lack of aggressive-

ness in the schoolroom she found it difficult to picture him as the daring conqueror of the Atlantic.

Research in Washington revealed that among his schoolmates he was known by the nickname of "Cheese."

Arthur J. Gorman, of Little Falls, Minnesota, who was secretary to Congressman Lindbergh while the latter was in Washington, recalls young Lindbergh as a favorite among the people with whom he came in contact in his father's office.

"He loved to tinker with machinery and to read history and world events," Gorman said in telling of Charles's activities in those days.

During most of the time Lindbergh lived in Washington airplanes still were considerable of a novelty. The Wrights were carrying on their experiments as was Curtiss, but planes were used chiefly to thrill crowds and flying was a highly hazardous occupation. Lindbergh even then was interested in flying machines and he took great delight in studying pictures of them and listening to his elders dis-

cuss what was then the latest wonder of invention.

Lindbergh's life in Washington was interrupted from time to time by his return to Minnesota when Congress was not in session. Back on the farm at Little Falls he would take up life in the open which both he and his father so enjoyed and lived most of his time out of doors. Frequent visits to Detroit and to other cities with his parents gave him something of a view of the eastern section of the United States in his early youth, impressions gathered then, according to his friends, remaining with him to this day. While awaiting a chance to begin his flight to Paris, Lindbergh spent one evening at Coney Island and recalled at that time that his last visit to New York's famous amusement park had been when a boy of ten years. It has been said that before Lindbergh finished his schooling he had visited a total of fourteen states.

Persons who knew Lindbergh as a youth in Washington described him as shy and bashful when among strangers but as a rollicking,

jovial lad when in the company of those with whom he felt himself acquainted.

"He was just a normal boy," his mother is quoted as having said in a recent interview, "and he had his troubles and his fights just about the same as other boys of his age did."

CHAPTER FOUR

THE TREE TOP

THE flying urge came early into the life of Lindbergh. Perhaps it was the development of his experimental turn of mind which had been nursed into bud amid the wheels and drills of the dentist's office in Detroit. By the time he was ten years of age the Wrights were past their pioneer experiments and airplanes were beginning to be seen here and there, although largely they remained the leading competitor of the tight-rope walker and the parachute jumper at the larger county fairs and big city carnivals.

But the world was talking more and more of aviation and it was not peculiar, perhaps, that a lad with a well developed desire to try anything that was new and the urge to attempt most anything himself, should turn to toy balloons and parachutes for his play.

The town of Little Falls, where Lindbergh

lived on a farm two miles from the business center, is filled with stories of his youthful exploits, dragged out by those who now can remember Charlie Lindbergh from almost his cradle days.

He began his experiments, which constituted his play, with the construction of toy balloons and parachutes. Soon the boys of the neighborhood were naturally attracted to the sport, after they had seen Charlie Lindbergh hurl from the tree tops or throw high in the air from the ground, one of his parachutes and watch it sail away on the summer winds. He made his parachutes of cloth, weighted with stone or with scraps of iron, each one better than the one which had gone before it. Soon parachute sailing became a major sport in Little Falls, but Charlie Lindbergh always could make the "chute" that would sail the greatest distance. Sometimes they would go for blocks and blocks.

Then, when he was satisfied that his latest effort in parachute construction was worthy of

its builder, villagers tell the story that he would hoist his bicycle into some tree top near his father's house, climb aboard it, and sit there dreaming that he was flying. It doesn't seem incredible that as he sat there looking far away into the skies and dreaming the dreams of childhood, that the flight to Paris was begun. Villagers say he spent hours daydreaming in the tree tops.

But the time would come when the dreams had to end and Lindbergh, with the village boys, answered the call of the school bell. Then he would leap upon his bicycle, and, with his cap on backwards or else bareheaded, he would pedal furiously for the two miles from his home to the school, always leading the way for the other boys.

Even in those early days, when a bicycle was his means of getting about, Lindbergh had a craving for speed and for the wind beating full upon his face as he cut through the air.

By the time he was fifteen years of age the bicycle was no longer fast enough for him and

he acquired a motor cycle. He rode it as he had ridden his bicycle, at top speed, and Little Falls became accustomed to the popping of its exhaust as Lindbergh whirled through town.

Next came an automobile. He bought it from Charles Farrow, who still is an automobile salesman in Little Falls.

"I recall teaching young Lindbergh to drive," Farrow said in telling of those days when Lindbergh was the dare-devil youth of the village.

"It came natural to him and he learned it all in a single day. He took to it like a duck to water."

Lindbergh then proceeded to drive this touring car, a machine which to-day would be considered as a rather uncertain contraption, perhaps, but then one of great popularity, as he had ridden his bicycle and his motor cycle. He went flying over the roads and through the towns often causing those who saw him to hold their breath. But never, on any of his vehicles, did he meet with accident. Lindbergh always

was, apparently, as sure and as skillful as when he flew his monoplane to Paris.

At school Lindbergh was a peculiar pupil. He finished his high-school course in 1918, after but three years instead of the usual four. But throughout the time he was in high school, he never took any part whatever in school activities, athletic or social. He had many acquaintances, but he had no close friends. Even in those days Charlie Lindbergh was a "lone wolf." He preferred to face life with himself carrying all the responsibility.

"He never paid any attention to the girls who were in his classes at high school," Miss Bertha Rothwell, who went to school with him, said, "and the girls paid no attention to him."

On completing his course at the Little Falls high school he entered the University of Wisconsin, taking his motor cycle with him. There he soon gained a reputation as something of a protestant against the existing social life of the school. One former classmate there said it was a matter of gossip that Charlie Lindbergh never wore a white shirt. Similar comment has

been made regarding his attire of high-school days and it stands out in sharp contrast to the immaculately attired Lindbergh who stepped from the cockpit of his monoplane the night he arrived in New York for his flight to Paris.

At college he turned to his motor cycle as a means of protest against the social life of the school. He rode it at breakneck speed wherever he went, and college gossip had it that that was the way that Lindbergh chose to register his disapproval of certain phases of college life.

But college was not to his liking. He felt it was not teaching him the things he wanted to know. He enjoyed experimental work in the college laboratories and he completed his experiments with great care and fine results. But, so college tradition is reported, when the experiment was completed he cared nothing more about it and as he disliked the writing of notes, his records were always behind.

Finally, after two years of struggling with his course in mechanical engineering, Lindbergh left college.

Perhaps even at that time it was the urge to fly that was working upon him and flying was not taught in college.

In another year he was found at Lincoln, Nebraska, making ready to fly.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

THE out-of-door life that Lindbergh lived in Minnesota in his youth permitted him to indulge to the fullest his love of animals. It was at that time that he first became known as a youth who preferred to travel alone. A faithful dog was always sufficient companion on the long excursions which, during his summer vacations, he was in the habit of taking into the woods.

There are two incidents in his life which, though entirely disconnected and which probably are significant of nothing whatsoever, stand out as characteristic. The first came when he was but six years of age. The family at that time was living for a short period in Minneapolis. They occupied the upper story of a two-story house. The family living downstairs had for a pet a pedigreed Angora cat.

Lindbergh was told that a cat, dropped

from any height, would invariably land upon its feet. To his childish mind the statement seemed worthy of investigation and he decided upon an experiment to determine its truth or falsity.

So Charlie appraised the Angora cat belonging to the people living on the floor beneath the Lindbergh flat and decided that it would be an excellent bit of apparatus for his experiment. He captured the cat, took it upstairs, and dropped it from a window.

Soon the little girl whose particular pet was the cat, was found crying. She explained that the boy upstairs had been mean to her pet and Lindbergh's mother took him to task for it. He explained to his mother in detail what he had done, and the reasons for his action.

"It landed on its feet," he told her, indicating that, regardless of the consequences, he had succeeded in obtaining results from his experiment.

This incident is told as probably the first manifestation, or at least the first practical application, of the urge to experiment and to test

each statement which interested him, which has led Lindbergh on through many episodes and was one of the underlying impulses which caused him to attempt his world-startling flight.

The second incident also has to do with a cat and it was typical of the thoughtfulness, and the capacity to find time regardless of how urgent the crisis, to give attention to what most men would consider but a trivial detail.

It took place the morning of May 20 at Roosevelt Field, Long Island, when Lindbergh was inspecting his airplane, making ready for the flight overseas. There were hundreds of people intent upon him. Mechanics were busy stowing the load which the machine had to carry, a load made up chiefly of gasoline and oil. Lindbergh was checking to see that nothing was overlooked.

In the ten days previous a kitten of unknown ancestry had come to the field and established itself in Lindbergh's hangar. He had noticed it almost immediately upon its arrival, and during those busy days many times had

stopped in the midst of his work to stroke the tiny thing or to see that it was fed. Often it would spend an hour riding on his shoulder as he worked on his plane or in the hangar. It became known as Lindbergh's mascot. The name of Patsy was given it.

So, when the flight was about to start, one of the field attendants came forward with the kitten, suggesting that it be placed in the cockpit as company for Lindbergh in the long hours he must spend alone with nothing but the drone of the motor and the quivering of the needles on his instrument board to keep him company. To his associates it seemed that the kitten he had played with at the field would be an ideal companion through such a period.

But Lindbergh thought not so much of himself and the comfort he might get from some animate companionship, but of the slender life of this little beast.

"No, don't put it in," he instructed. "It may get cold where we are going and the kitten might die."

To save the life of a kitten he willingly had

robbed himself of any chance of companionship during thirty-four hours of continuous driving forward through the air.

This incident attracted much attention. Humane societies commended Lindbergh for the exhibition of kindliness toward animals. But it was not only a survival of his lifelong love of animals but also an example of the ability he had developed to consider every angle of each proposition presented and make his decision regardless of the satisfaction of personal whims.

But dogs are Lindbergh's real companions despite the fact that his name is more frequently linked with stories about cats. As a youth he wandered through the Minnesota woods around his home, often being gone for an entire day while still very young, with only a dog for a companion.

One summer he built a boat and on it, with only his dog to keep him company, he embarked day after day on long excursions on the near-by waters. He appeared to make these explorations alone not so much because he disliked the

company of others as because he seemed sufficient unto himself. It was not necessary to his happiness that he should have human companionship and even in those days when engaged in the thing which interested him most, he always wanted to be alone and carry alone all of the responsibility. It is difficult to say now whether this trait was a development of those hours of patrolling the woods and the streams with his dog and gun, or whether a desire to be alone was the reason for such excursions.

There was hardly a tree or a nook in the woods around Little Falls, where the family lived, that Lindbergh did not know by the time he was fifteen years of age. He became a crack pistol shot and was also good with a rifle. But a cap pistol was one of his first cherished toys and he always seemed to prefer the smaller weapon. Later, when he was a student at the University of Wisconsin, the only trophy he had won up to that time in any important competition was a medal of the Reserve Officers Training Corps for pistol shooting. He prized it highly. Stories are told that his skill was so

developed that on occasion he could entertain his friends with exhibitions which included such feats as shooting the ashes from a cigarette, although no one has yet come forward to vouch for those stories.

Lindbergh's father was always a great admirer of Theodore Roosevelt and young Lindbergh was a great admirer of his father. So it happened that the father's admiration for Roosevelt was magnified into hero worship by the son. His father told him stories of Roosevelt's campaigns in Cuba and of the Rough Riders. Soon the youthful Charlie determined that he would become a Rough Rider. He added a horse to his list of animal friends and there followed a year or two of extreme anxiety on the part of his mother as almost daily she saw her son riding wildly through the country, alternating between the characters of a Rough Rider in Cuba and a cowboy on the western plains.

During all of this time he continued his interest in machinery and was following closely the development of the airplane. He became a

motor-cycle enthusiast, but later dismantled his motor cycle to apply the engine to a home-made iceboat in which he rode the ice of the near-by lakes. The iceboat came to grief in a collision, but after a couple of weeks it was in commission once more, repaired through the resourcefulness of its youthful builder.

Probably the greatest difficulty which Lindbergh encountered in these boyhood years was in the matter of schooling. With the family forced to divide its time between Washington and Little Falls, Charles attended school part of the time in Washington and then in the middle of a term Congress would adjourn, his father would return to Little Falls, and he would become a student again in his home city. This constant changing interfered with his schooling, but the losses were made up under careful tutoring by his mother, who, before her marriage, had been a teacher and who now, since the death of her husband, again is teaching. She spent much time with Charlie at his studies and it was through her efforts that he was able to keep up with his classmates.

There came a time, after Lindbergh had completed high school, when his father was forced to give up the management of the family farm and devote his entire time to affairs away from home. Conduct of the farm, accordingly, fell upon Charles. He took hold with his customary thoroughness, but soon decided that there was not enough use made of mechanical power. He set about to remedy the defect. When he finished almost everything around the farm and farmhouse was mechanically operated and the farm became a center of much interest in the community.

These were the formative years of Lindbergh's life and it seems remarkable that through them all certain traits can be traced with such clear outline. He never lost his interest in aviation or in invention, never seemed to change, but only to develop, in character. What was more, he was continually dreaming a dream which he realized the night he electrified the world with his dramatic arrival at Le Bourget Field, near Paris.

CHAPTER SIX

WINGS

BY 1921 Lindbergh was ready within himself to start upon the career which since then has carried him so far. He had gone through high school and two years of college, had learned self-reliance in the woods of Minnesota, had accumulated much from reading and from books, and had formed in his own mind the definite decision as to what his career would be.

So, soon after leaving college he let his decision to become an aviator be known. He saved and gathered together what money he could, reënforced himself with more intensive study, and left Little Falls for Lincoln, Nebraska, where the Lincoln Aircraft Company maintained a school for student fliers.

When he arrived at the Lincoln flying field and applied for enrollment as a student-aviator, so little was thought of his chances of ever

attaining any great skill that no record was kept of the date of his arrival. The immediate impression upon those who were around the flying field was that a country boy had come to them with ambitions to fly, but that his ambition would soon be swept aside when faced with the problems which those who live in the air are forced to meet.

Ray Page, president of the company which was operating the flying school, described him as a typical country boy, tall, gangling, inexperienced, and even gawky.

"He blushed when he came to us in a way that would have done credit to any high-school girl," said Page.

He was placed under the tutelage of an instructor whose name, like the date of Lindbergh's entrance, has become lost in the few years which have passed since then. He was given ground training, which consisted of a study of airplane construction and an explanation of the theory and mechanics of flying. He studied the construction and the details of operation of airplane engines. He was made

familiar with the various types of planes and he learned something of air currents and the obstacles which come in the way of those who would fly. Then he was taken into the air by his instructor and given an opportunity to become used to soaring above the ground. Finally the day came when he was to sit at the controls and the instructor would ride at his side teaching him how to handle the "ship" himself.

"He was not talkative, was very subdued and unassuming in his manner, but when he got into the pilot's nest, what a difference there was," said Page, telling of the training period.

"As soon as he was permitted to take a plane aloft every one began to notice him. He was a changed man when he got his hands on the controls. He wasn't bashful or blushing any more. He was all confidence and he was certain of every move he made. He didn't appear gawky. He made an airplane behave like no beginner ever did before.

"Yet he was never even tempted to be reckless, as many youths are when they find that

they really can fly. But he was daringly courageous and amazingly cool under all circumstances.

"Pretty soon every one around the field was talking about the kid being one of the few men born naturally adapted to flying. It took his flight to Paris to convince the world that here was a remarkable aviator, but we knew it long before he finished his course at the flying school."

Lindbergh spent days practicing with the planes set aside for instruction purposes and in all his spare time he was reading of aviation and learning all he could by observation. He was at the field early and late. But just as he left college when he felt that it was not teaching him what he wanted to know, he left the aviation school when he felt that he had exhausted its possibilities. Tradition has it that he never was permitted to go up alone—fly "solo," as the aviators say—while enrolled as a student-flier. When he came to a given point in his progress he decided for himself that he was capable of flying alone and he did not feel

it necessary to spend more time as a student to satisfy himself or his instructors on that point.

While in Lincoln he shared a room, at the home of a family named Peckham, with another embryo aviator, named Hall. When he flew to Paris, Lincoln searched so deeply for "Lindbergh lore" that not only was his old room located but the old garage in which he kept a motor cycle was found and for a time became a place of large public interest.

Harry Ellis, of Lincoln, also interested in flying, was one of his closest friends there and it was through Ellis that Lindbergh came to mix parachute jumping with his aviation.

"I had done some balloon work myself," said Ellis. "He was making great progress in flying and wanted to 'drop.'

"I thought he had plenty of nerve, although he didn't have much to say and didn't make any boasts. He would get me talking about parachute jumping and would question me on every little point. He was getting all the information he could.

"There was a field on Twentieth Street (in

Lincoln) where much flying was done and where it was possible to practice parachute work. Pretty soon I learned he was going down there and 'dropping' all over the place.

"He had, it seemed, got all the information he could from me about parachutes and then arranged to learn the business for himself. Soon every one was talking about the perfect manner in which he handled himself in his 'drops.' It was just natural to him."

Having satisfied himself that he had mastered flying and parachute jumping, he began looking around for an airplane of his own. He heard of a public sale of old army planes in Georgia and he went there and bought for himself an old type biplane. It was not what other aviators considered much of an airplane, but under the skillful treatment of Lindbergh it proved capable of long service. Returning to Lincoln he began operating an "air-taxi" service. He charged the farmers and visitors to Lincoln a small price for a trip in his airplane and his business became reasonably prosperous.

He began building for himself a reputation as a skillful and safe flier.

At last Lindbergh tired of Lincoln and finally gave up his somewhat thriving business there, got into his airplane, and flew back home to Little Falls. It was in Little Falls that he had dreamed of flying during his youth and those who have dreamed in childhood may imagine that the day in 1922, when Charlie Lindbergh came flying his own airplane into his old home town, was for him a day approaching in its thrills his arrival at Le Bourget on May 21, 1927.

The townspeople were immediately curious over this quiet, silent lad and his airship. They gathered at its quickly built hangar to see it and Charlie began doing an air-taxi business at home. Not all of the townspeople would chance riding with Lindbergh, but many of them had their first ride through the skies in his old army biplane.

At this time his father, who had not been in Congress since 1917 and was dividing his time between the practice of law and taking his part

in Minnesota politics as a leader in the Non-Partisan League movement, was for a second time a candidate for Governor of his state. Lindbergh remained at the family home through the long campaign, giving his father valuable help. He carried him from town to town by airplane—a method of campaigning which had not only much of value as a rapid means of transportation but which gained considerable hold upon the public imagination. The campaign was spirited, as were all of the elder Lindbergh's campaigns in later years. It resulted in defeat for Lindbergh but by a comparatively narrow margin.

Thus by 1922 Lindbergh not only had realized his first dream of flying, by putting on his wings at the Lincoln flying school, but he had demonstrated that he could put his flying to practical use and turn it into a method of making a living. But he was not content, after the defeat of his father, to remain in Little Falls where the possibilities of flying were somewhat limited. Now that he was wearing wings he yearned to stretch them like a bird. In his

boyhood he had played that he was a cowboy, riding wildly over the western ranges. Now he began to think of that same western country, not as a place to ride a horse, but as a place where he could exercise his newly acquired talents. The freedom of it appealed to him and finally he could not resist it.

So, in 1922, he once more loaded into his airplane the small amount of worldly possessions it was his custom to carry and began flying westward. This trip was to lead him through all sorts of adventures and was another step in the preparation for the achievements which were to come.

He still was clinging to the habit he had acquired in boyhood of traveling with little in the way of baggage and always alone. There seems something fitting, both to his nature and the progress of his career, in the picture of young Lindbergh, alone in an old biplane, flying from town to town and seldom traveling by any other means. One can easily imagine him the happiest when he was taking off perhaps for the west after a period of comparative

quiet in Little Falls. Also one can easily believe the stories which are told of this lad's having become the envy of his associates of school days in Little Falls. He took for himself the freedom of the air while they were still pinned to the ground, probably viewed by him unconsciously as slaves to automobiles, of motor cycles, or to nothing at all.

He was rapidly becoming a modern equivalent of the knight of the middle ages who sallied forth from some stern castle to seek adventure. Just as did the knights of those old times, Lindbergh usually found the thing which he sought.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE STUNT FLIER

BETWEEN the time in 1922 when Lindbergh started west from Little Falls and 1925 when he joined the air-mail service, he gathered more and more of the vast store of experience which has made him into one of the world's greatest flying men. At the same time he made himself known in almost every town of any size in northern Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and, to a certain extent, in adjoining states. He seemed to enjoy the hazards of flying in this rugged western country, while other airmen preferred the plains, and he gloried in beating in a fair battle the storms which at times sweep the mountain regions.

In that region most every one who attended a country fair during those years can recall to-day having seen Lindbergh fly. When he arrived in the west he had just turned twenty.

He joined Robert J. Lynch, now of Butte, Montana, and the two flew from one town to another, thrilling the people who gathered at fairs and carnivals, with the capers they cut with their airplanes. Lynch at that time was the senior flier. He had been a flight instructor for army aviators during the War and, for that matter, he still is known as an aviator in the west.

"I knew Lindbergh in those days as a fellow who had more pure grit than any one I had ever seen before," said Lynch, telling of their experiences.

"First he was with us as a mechanic, then he became a parachute jumper and general aërial dare-devil. One of his stunts was to walk out on the wing of an airplane going ninety miles an hour and step off into the air with his parachute. That made many a Roman holiday for the folks who went to the country fairs.

"He was known to every one as 'Slim' Lindbergh.

"Lindbergh knew how to fly and pretty soon he was flying by himself and was ready either

to be the parachute jumper or to pilot a 'stunt' machine, whatever the people wanted."

People in the west say that he gave more thrills per hour of flying than any other aviator could offer. The "falling leaf," the "Immelmann turn," spins, dives and all of the capers which airmen have invented to make watching crowds gasp with excitement, seemed to come easy to Lindbergh.

"He simply out-aced all the other aces," said Lynch, "with his daring and his tricks.

"His particular specialty was to ascend to a great height, loop and turn in a dizzy series of maneuvers, and then swoop down at terrific speed, until even aviators thought he surely would crash. He would come closer to the earth than any other flier dared, but he always had control of his plane and just about the moment they were calling for the ambulance to be ready to carry Slim Lindbergh away, his plane would stick its nose up and he would soar away again in a graceful ascent.

"I always wondered, when I saw him do that, whether any one in the crowd had a weak

heart. If any one had, that trick certainly would stop its beating, completely."

Lindbergh became known not only for his skill in aviation throughout Montana, Wyoming and parts of Colorado at that time, but for the characteristic he still has, namely that of being on time at all costs. It became a matter of general knowledge that when Lindbergh was scheduled to fly at a country fair or public carnival, it was certain that Lindbergh would fly. That was not always true of all the aviators who were engaged in such occupations in those days. Many times he would complete his program at one fair, get into his plane and fly, regardless of weather, to the next town for an appearance the following day, braving storms and most difficult flying conditions, rather than disappoint the public. That characteristic still remains with him. During the crowded days which followed his arrival in Paris, despite the throngs which pressed around him and the scores of demands for his time, Lindbergh was only late to keep an appointment on one

occasion and then the blame could well be placed upon the ardor of his admirers.

When the flying program for the year was completed Lindbergh went to work in a garage in Billings, Montana. He was exceedingly popular in that town for his daring aeronautics. As a side line to his work as a mechanic he did parachute drops from time to time, as a bit of advertising for the garage which employed him.

He broke into his western life at one time to return to the favorite recreation of his youth, namely an excursion by boat. He decided that he would return to Little Falls by canoe, starting down the Missouri River and following it to the Mississippi and thence up that river to Little Falls. He outfitted himself and made his way to the headwaters of the Missouri where he launched his canoe and started.

All went well for a time and he apparently was supremely happy as he paddled along alone. But finally the boat became entangled in an eddy, overturned, and sank. Lindbergh

was without means of transportation. His life was barely spared.

It was during these flying days in the west that, according to Lindbergh's aviator friends, he had the only real fright of his life. Then it was more fear for the safety of two men who were passengers in his airplane than it was fear that harm would come to him.

Captain J. Wray Vaughn, manager of a flying circus, tells the story. Vaughn had engaged Lindbergh to fly with his organization and the party was at Fowler, Colorado.

"Lindbergh was our great 'stunt' pilot at the time and he was giving the people plenty of thrills," said Vaughn. "We had come to Fowler to give an exhibition. Two men came to the field and wanted to be taken up. Lindbergh accordingly hopped off with them. It was late afternoon.

"The ship had hardly left the ground when a nasty windstorm blew up. The wind howled and Lindbergh, with his two passengers, circled over the field, but he could tell by the feel of the plane that it would be dangerous to land

in such a blow. So he went up higher and higher to keep out of the danger zone and before the storm had abated it was pitch dark.

"The field where we were flying was small. It was not a regular flying field, but just a big open space which had been turned over to us for our exhibitions. In it were two haystacks and several trees. In daylight a pilot as skilled as Lindbergh could land and take off with perfect safety, but at night it was a different matter. Flares were not easily available in those days and lighting such a field was an almost unknown practice in that region.

"So while the field might be all right in daylight, it was about the last place in the world which an aviator would pick for a landing at night.

"The wind was still pretty heavy and the night was pitch black. I didn't know what was going to be done about it. I knew he couldn't stay aloft forever and that he would have to come down some time.

"So I moved up three automobiles and directed their headlights so they would outline,

although perhaps weakly, the boundaries of the field and show up the haystacks and the trees.

"Lindbergh was watching and pretty soon he began coming down. He circled around, looking the situation all over, and then he dropped low and made a perfect landing.

"The two passengers got out and were enthusiastic about the splendid ride Lindbergh had given them. They thought the long trip was a part of our generosity and they probably don't know to this day that only unusual skill and cool-headedness on the part of Lindbergh saved their lives.

"But Lindbergh got out of the plane, came over to me and said:

" 'You can put that down in the book—in all my flying experience that's the first time I ever was frightened.' "

Lindbergh had joined Vaughn after going to St. Louis during a break in his career in the mountain states and Vaughn's account of how Lindbergh joined his organization is typical of the stories which are told of the flier.

"I wired Lambert Field in St. Louis one

day that I needed a pilot for a summer 'stunt' tour through the west," Vaughn said. "I told them I wanted a pilot with plenty of nerve and one who knew his business. They replied that they were sending Lindbergh. I had never heard of him before.

"So I went down to the station in Denver, Colorado, where he was to join me, to meet him. I expected to see a regulation 'trick' airman all dressed up in air aviation uniform of the latest type. I stood on the station platform scanning the crowd trying to pick out some one who looked like an aviator and finally I noticed a tall, gangling kid in a misfit blue suit, about three sizes too small for him. He wore an old cloth cap and carried a cardboard suitcase and a duffle bag.

"The crowd thinned out, but I couldn't find my pilot anywhere. The kid kept hanging around like he was looking for some one and after awhile he and I were about the only ones left. Then he came up to me and said kind of hesitatingly and apologetically:

" 'Are you Captain Vaughn?'

"I said that I was.

" 'I'm Lindbergh,' the kid said.

"I looked him over again and appraised his ill-fitting clothes and noted his lanky and gangling build, and I said to myself, 'If this kid is a pilot I'm a horse.'

"But the first time I saw him in the air I knew that I was wrong. There never was another like him."

Lindbergh remained with the flying circus until late in 1924, making occasional visits to the midwest. He spent most of his time and earned practically all of his living, as an exhibition or a commercial aviator. When he went to Paris with no clothes excepting those which he wore and with nothing in the way of personal accessories excepting the things which he considered were absolutely necessary, he was but duplicating the habits which he had formed in those days with the flying circus in the west. He had then always "traveled light." His usual equipment consisted of the clothes he wore, his airplane and what baggage he could tuck away in the always generous pockets of

his flying clothes. He had not yet developed entirely the discriminating care with which he more recently has selected and arranged his flying costume and, although he was never slovenly, his uniform in those days was far different from the elaborate leather clothing, fancy helmet and great goggles which were a part of the equipment which many who followed his line used to assist them in dazzling the crowds which gathered and paid the money to be thrilled.

But flying gradually was becoming a more and more serious thing to this young man. Nineteen hundred and twenty-four found him considering the military value of his skill and thinking that perhaps it would be well were he to turn it to some more serious use.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ARMY AVIATOR

LINDBERGH decided that he would interrupt his career as an exhibition airman to qualify himself as a military aviator although it is doubtful if he had any idea of following the army life as a definite objective. So when the 1924 flying season among the county fairs and carnivals was at an end he came back to St. Louis and from there flew to Brooks Field, near San Antonio, Texas, to enroll himself in the army primary training school.

He had been flying for three years at that time and had several hundred hours in the air to his credit. He never had had an accident. But despite the fact that his skill already was proved, Lindbergh made so little comment upon what he had done that it was not until after he was enrolled that army officers discovered and wrote into his record the fact

that he had been flying almost exclusively for three years.

It was recorded among his friends that he asked no favors because of his experience and entered no objection whatsoever to being thrown into what must have been a rather tedious course in the fundamentals of flying. He worked hard on the academic subjects which the course required and was an interested pupil in the hours devoted to study of airplane structure and other mechanical phases of aviation.

His arrival at Brooks Field was typical of the Lindbergh manner of doing things. After the necessary correspondence to secure preliminary enrollment and make certain that he would be accepted at the school, Lindbergh had taken the means of travel which he always favored, flying alone in his own machine, and had gone south from St. Louis to San Antonio.

"I recall the day he arrived," Sergeant D. Wood of Brooks Field said in telling of Lindbergh's life in the army flying school. "He

came in an old, dilapidated Standard biplane with most of the fabric gone from the lower half of one wing. But that didn't seem to bother Lindbergh any. He handled it just as if the wing were sound."

The story is told, although it never was formally confirmed, that an officer came out and saw Lindbergh's plane soon after its arrival and then ordered it off the field saying that "somebody might get hurt trying to fly that thing."

"Lindbergh was a quiet, unassuming chap who seldom went to town and was always studying," Sergeant Wood said.

Just as when he first arrived at Lincoln, Nebraska, to begin his study of aviation in 1921, apparently Lindbergh did not particularly impress the authorities at Brooks Field when he came for the commencement of his army training. But Lindbergh himself was in his element. There were instructors at hand who knew the scientific side of aviation, there were plenty of technical works and reports to study, and there were planes of the latest type,

engines, designs and materials of every kind with which he could familiarize himself. It offered a rich field for him. In the three years before, his own airplane had been about the only bit of aviation equipment to which he had had access excepting on his visits to St. Louis when the equipment of the flying field there and of the other aviators gathered around it, was free to him. But in the army school he found a large range of things new and interesting.

He took every advantage of this opportunity and fellow students say that it was his custom to study late into the night and to devote much spare time to tinkering around the shops and with the planes upon the field.

He also acted as a tutor to some of the less experienced of the student-aviators drawing on his own experience to help them understand the groundwork of aviation.

Major Clarence D. Young, now air regulations chief of the Department of Commerce at Washington, was Lindbergh's commanding officer at Brooks Field.

"He never did anything out of the ordinary," Young said, "but one could easily tell he was a born aviator. He was quiet and unassuming and measured up to the standard required of an aviator.

"He should not be called 'Lucky.' I think he ought to be called 'Homing Pigeon Lindbergh.' He showed at the army school that he had the natural instincts of a bird. He recognizes that and that is why he had so much confidence when he was flying over the ocean. He always had the faculty of knowing how he could get to the place to which he was going."

The records show that Lindbergh finished his preliminary army training with an average of ninety-three in the twenty-three subjects he was required to study. That average was considered at the time as exceptionally high. In seventeen of the subjects his marks were graded as "excellent"; in five they were rated as "good"; and in one as "fair." His detailed standings may be of interest as furnishing something of an insight into Lindbergh as a student, and is as follows:

Infantry drill, 95; army regulations, 99; military law, 99; army paper work, 85; military hygiene, 93; property accounting, 72; field service regulation, 99; guard, 99; military sketching and map reading, 94; motors, 94; aërodynamics, 99; rigging, 86; instruments, 90; theory of radio communication, 90; code and signals, 95; aërial navigation, 88; meteorology, 99; photography, 93; Browning machine gun, 89; Lewis machine gun, 99; synchronizing gears, 99; aërial sights, 88; camera guns, 92; parachutes, 94.

Most of the technical subjects, it must be remembered, were entirely new to Lindbergh at that time. Those include rigging, radio theory, aërial navigation, meteorology, and the special army subjects such as drill and military law. Except for his brief instruction in Lincoln, he had been a self-made aviator whose knowledge of flying came from flying and not from studies of aërodynamics and such topics.

Lindbergh completed his preliminary training at Brooks Field in September, 1924, and went to Kelly Field, also at San Antonio,

where he entered the Advanced Flying School. There he was even more in his element for soon after entrance it was not only his privilege but part of his course to study and to fly practically every type of plane used in the army. He could get his hands on the controls of machines which marked the latest developments in aviation and he took delight in trying his skill upon them. It was at Kelly Field that he began to attract attention from the army fliers.

It also was while at Kelly Field that Lindbergh had his first accident and made the first of his four descents from disabled planes by parachute which have made him the only aviator in the United States with such a record. This accident was an aërial collision, the most rare of all forms of airplane accidents.

Lindbergh was flying over Kelly Field in an army plane at the time. Other aviators were in the air, engaged in practice, experimental and test flights. One of them was a Lieutenant McAllister. Just how the accident occurred no one seems to know but of a sudden

the two planes met and locked wings high in the air.

"I felt a slight jolt followed by a crash," Lindbergh wrote in his formal report of the accident. "My head was thrown forward against the cowling and my plane seemed to turn around and hang nearly motionless for an instant. I closed the throttle and saw an SE-5 plane with Lieutenant McAllister in the cockpit, a few feet on my left. He was apparently unhurt and was getting ready to jump.

"Our ships locked together. My right wing was folded back. The ships started to mill around and the wires began whistling. The right wing commenced vibrating and striking my head at the bottom of each vibration.

"I climbed out and jumped backwards, as far as I could. I was afraid the planes might fall on me so I did not pull the cord of my parachute until I had dropped several hundred feet.

"I saw Lieutenant McAllister floating above me and the wrecked ships about one hun-

dred yards to one side. I watched them until, still locked together, they crashed into the mesquite and burst into flames.

"Although the impact of landing was too great for me to remain standing, I landed in a ditch at the edge of the mesquite and was not injured in any way.

"During my descent I lost my goggles, a vest pocket camera which fitted tightly in my hip pocket and the rip cord of the parachute."

The airplanes had collided at an altitude of 5,000 feet and those who had witnessed the accident still tell of the excitement on the ground as they saw Lindbergh and McAllister plunge from their cockpits and come swinging down in their parachutes.

In February, 1925, Lindbergh was graduated from the Advanced Flying School at Kelly Field with the rating of a pursuit pilot, one of the highest given, and a commission as a second lieutenant in the Army Air Corps Reserve.

Lindbergh had his picture taken in uniform and then, apparently, forgot about military

flying, being willing to put it away until some time when it might be necessary to use it. He returned to St. Louis, where he soon established himself at Lambert Field. Perhaps that marked the real turning point in his aviation career. He was rapidly losing his boyish view towards flying as merely an adventurous sport and beginning to look upon it as a serious, commercial institution.

Lindbergh's first visit to St. Louis had been in October, 1923, between two of his flying tours of the west. Those who were at the Lambert Flying Field at St. Louis at that time describe him as a tall, gangling rustic, with trousers perhaps a bit too short for him and whose aviator's helmet always sat a bit too high upon his head. Even then, however, they recognized him as a skillful aviator. His plane was the old army salvage machine he had bought in Georgia, the veteran of his exhibition tours of Wyoming, Colorado and Montana. While on this visit to St. Louis, Harlan Guerney, a parachute jumper at that time and now himself an aviator here, fell from Lindbergh's

plane and was injured. Lindbergh remained in St. Louis until Guerney was recovered and in the meantime sold his plane, parting company with the first of the several airships he has owned. Not long afterward he bought the Standard biplane in which he flew to Texas for his army training.

When Lindbergh came back from Kelly Field, he was beginning to shake off some of the appearance of a rustic which had marked him for so many years and was becoming the well knit, athletic appearing man who flew to Paris. He joined a group of aviators who maintained bachelor quarters near the flying field and cast around for work as a commercial flier. The bachelor apartments of Lindbergh and his friends became a somewhat noted place in St. Louis. They lived much in the atmosphere of a college dormitory, with Lindbergh permitting his penchant for practical jokes to run riot.

It was soon thereafter that Lindbergh made his second descent from a disabled plane, by parachute. He was flying as a test pilot trying

out for defects in construction a group of new planes delivered at the field. The work was exceedingly hazardous. It required the aviator to take aloft the new and strange planes and put them through all of the tests known to airmen which might reveal faulty construction and material. It was almost a case of going up in a plane and if it came down without being wrecked it was a good plane—otherwise it was faulty.

He took a plane to an altitude of some 2,000 feet, felt it out in straight flying and then began carefully putting it through more rigid tests. When 2,500 feet in the air, he threw the machine into a tail spin. It raced toward the earth. When Lindbergh attempted to right it again, it failed to answer the controls. Lindbergh remained with the ship until it was only 250 feet above the ground. Then he jumped with his parachute. The drop was too short to permit the parachute to exert its full strength in breaking his fall and he landed on his back in a garden near the field, the plane crashing only a short distance from him. Field

attendants ran to him and found Lindbergh bleeding from the nose, but at the same time picking himself up and folding his parachute.

"Defective design somewhere," he said. "I couldn't come out of the tail spin. It was a little too close."

Lindbergh rested for two hours and that afternoon was in the air again, looking for defective design in another plane.

CHAPTER NINE

THE FLYING MAIL MAN

IN the fall of 1925 Lindbergh joined the Robertson Aircraft Corporation of St. Louis as one of its pilots. He then gave up free-lance flying and settled down to the hard, and adventurous life of a commercial aviator. It required him to be up early and late, to fly in all sorts of weather and on all kinds of missions and to be ready for anything at any time. This life seemed to fit in perfectly with Lindbergh's temperament and he soon became known not only as daring and skillful but as one of the most tireless men in the business of flying.

He would often come into the field late at night, land, put away his plane and then retire to the dormitory where he lived with his fellow aviators and, with his practical joke and hilarity, turn it into a bedlam. On the field he was

the friend of all the mechanics, the laborers and the workmen. He was exceedingly democratic. He was known to every one as "Slim" and he never was too busy or too absorbed to greet even the most lowly laborer.

It was at this time that he developed his flair for the carefully selected aviation costume, always neat and clean, which so well marked him on his arrival in New York. The hard work at the field gradually developed him until he became known for his strength as well as for his endurance.

He spent most of his time at the flying quarters when not in the air. St. Louis saw little of him, excepting in the rôle of an aviator. He seldom went to theaters, and he ate, as a rule, at the little lunchroom maintained at the field where his healthy appetite made him a favored customer. A small steak or a chop, two or even more eggs, toast, potatoes and coffee are said to have been known as his favorite breakfast, particularly when he was arising early to undertake some long flight.

He remained bashful and blushing when

strangers were around him but when among those with whom he was well acquainted he was jovial and nothing seemed to shake his gayety from him. The most serious occasion failed to make him serious.

To the people who knew Lindbergh around the flying field he was even in those days much of a hero because of his jovial and democratic manner and when he started flying to Paris it developed that not one of these old friends doubted for a minute but that he would succeed.

Herbert B. Ehler, connected with a New York hospital, told a typical story of Lindbergh's days as a commercial pilot, illustrative of the thoroughness with which he prepared for every emergency.

Ehler was in St. Louis and was called hurriedly to Cincinnati, 360 miles away by air. He went to Lambert Field and engaged an airplane to take him. Lindbergh was to be the pilot.

When he arrived at the field flying conditions were not of the best.

"Lindbergh, evidently fearing that some emergency might arise, said he would not take me until I had made a descent in a parachute so I would know what to do in an emergency. I objected at first, but he insisted and it was imperative that I go, so finally I consented. He took me into the air to an altitude of about 1,500 feet and signaled for me to jump. I did and when I reached the ground Lindbergh was already there, waiting for me."

The flight to Cincinnati was then made in three hours, nine minutes, without mishap, but had there been trouble Lindbergh would have had the satisfaction of knowing that his passenger was ready to abandon the plane in an emergency and that he had taken precautions which would lighten his own responsibility.

In the spring of 1925 Lindbergh became the "Flying Mail Man" when he pioneered the St. Louis-Chicago air-mail route. His first flight over that route was made April 15, 1925. His work flying the night mail between those two cities during the next year made him not

only recognized as an aviator of unusual ability to meet emergencies, but as one of the most reliable fliers carrying the mails.

Night after night Lindbergh, with Thomas P. Nelson, and Philip R. Love flew with the mail between St. Louis and Chicago during the winter of 1925-26. Records show that despite the fact that the route was not lighted and the storms were severe, they delivered the mail at its destination with as much regularity as did the fliers on many of the routes which were marked by beacons and protected by other devices.

Lindbergh enjoyed his work with the air mail. It gave him the feeling that at last he was putting his flying skill to some practical use. What was more it was as full of adventure for the pioneer airman as was the riding of the pony express routes with the mail across the western plains, for the express riders of some seventy-five years before. It required him to meet the airmen's enemies, fog and sleet, night after night. Seldom did he permit them to best him but often he was forced to resort to the use

of all his skill and all of his resourcefulness to come safely through.

It was this flying experience which gave him the knowledge of weather conditions, of how to fly under, over, or around a storm, and how to avoid or escape sleet, which took him safely to Paris despite the fact that he encountered sleet soon after he had left the coast of Newfoundland. Sleet he found was always his worst enemy. In fog he could remain in flight as long as his fuel supply lasted and perhaps the fog would drift away or he could fly beyond it. But sleet not only batters at the plane, making flying difficult, but soon freezes on to it, weights the machine and in a short time will bear it down to earth with the pilot helpless to prevent it.

Lindbergh developed an actual preference for flying at night and he enjoyed the route where there were no beacon lights and where adventure was always just ahead.

But his nightly trips between St. Louis and Chicago with the mail were not enough. He found time by day to engage in commercial

flying for the Robertson Company, which held the air-mail contract. His skill made him in demand and he was always ready to go. He flew to many cities in a radius of a few hundred miles of St. Louis. One of the flights which attracted the most attention among airmen was a night flight to Memphis, Tenn. He took a St. Louis newspaperman to that city the night of the Florida hurricane of 1926, and landed him in time to board there a train for Florida which had left St. Louis the previous morning. Then he turned around and flew back to St. Louis over an unfamiliar and unlighted course, landing at Lambert Field in time to start out immediately with the morning air mail for Chicago.

In addition to making these commercial flights between his regular trips to St. Louis, Lindbergh found plenty of time for other work at the flying field. He repaired planes, overhauled them, and restored to smooth, working condition, motors which had become worn or out of adjustment. He was willing to undertake any job, no matter how menial, which

was to be done around the field. Fourteen to sixteen hours of work each day seemed to be his rule, and he thrived on all of it.

He joined the Missouri National Guard, One Hundred Tenth Aviation Squadron, while an air-mail pilot and became a flight commander with the rank of captain in the National Guard. He took part from time to time in National Guard activities and for the first time since the year before when he was graduated from the Advance Flying School at Kelly Field, he put his military training to practice. But even when in camp with the National Guard he was unable to restrain his mania for practical jokes. A story is told of how he found a flight lieutenant sleeping in a small tent one hot day in the guard camp. He staked down the sides of the tent, made the flaps secure and waited while the sun turned the interior of the tent stifling hot. The unfortunate lieutenant tore down the tent before he finally freed himself. Lindbergh enjoyed it immensely although senior officers may have

considered it a bit undignified for a flight commander.

Those were the days when Lindbergh was storing up the knowledge and experience which made it possible for him to fly to Europe. His remarkable faculty of making friends with everybody and always maintaining his poise, while still being gay and jovial, was also developing. His immediate chief, Major William B. Robertson, head of the Robertson Aircraft Company for which Lindbergh flew, became particularly fond of him, and that friendship had much to do with the final organization of the transatlantic flight.

" 'Slim' Lindbergh had a smile for every one in those days just as he does now," Major Robertson said on a visit to New York immediately after the flight to Paris was completed and before Lindbergh had returned to this country. "And how he loved to fly. The worse the weather, the better he seemed to like it."

Robertson, like others who had direct contact over comparatively long periods with

Lindbergh, insists that the element of luck plays little part in his success. He objected to the name of "Lucky" being applied to the aviator.

"Lindbergh is not lucky," he insisted. "He succeeds because he has good judgment. He knows what to do to meet a given emergency. Less experienced or less sound aviators could not do what he has done, but Lindbergh can do it, not because he has luck, but because he knows how and he flies just naturally."

CHAPTER TEN

THE CATERPILLAR CLUB

WHEN a man makes an emergency landing from a disabled airplane in a parachute his fellow aviators say that he has taken out membership in "The Caterpillar Club." The club is entirely imaginary. It is merely one of those designations which spring up among men of the same callings to indicate a fellowship among those who have had unusual experiences.

Charles A. Lindbergh holds four memberships in the Caterpillar Club. His first came when he descended at Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas, after his aërial collision there. The second came while he was a test pilot at Lambert Field, St. Louis. Both of those descents were in daylight. His next two memberships came while flying the night mail from St. Louis to Chicago and both were made at

night. As a result Lindbergh not only is recorded by the War Department as the only flier who has landed safely four times from an airplane disabled in flight, but as among the few men who have made successful landings by parachute at night.

Lindbergh gives his own account of these adventures in formal reports made to his superiors immediately afterwards.

In the first of his two night descents he was actually chased to earth by his plane which, although the engine once had stopped, resumed operation after he had abandoned it. It spiraled down in wide circles close to him, threatening to crash into him and his slowly moving and less easily controlled parachute at any moment. It stands as one of the unique experiences of aviation.

It seems characteristic of Lindbergh that in each of these instances he reveals himself as having floated with much composure to earth and that all the while he was making close observation of all that was going on around him. He never seemed to doubt for a moment that he

was entirely safe. His attitude was more that of some one exceedingly interested in something unusual that was transpiring. His reports also reveal once more, his careful, painstaking nature, for he records whether he saved or lost the rip cord of his parachute, and mourns the loss of a flashlight.

His first descent by parachute at night, and the third of his flying career, was made September 16, 1925.

"I took off from Lambert-St. Louis Field at 4:25 P.M. September 16, and after an uneventful trip arrived at Springfield, Ill., at 5:10 P.M. and Peoria, Ill., at 5:55 P.M.," Lindbergh wrote in the report of the incident.

"Off the Peoria Field at 6:10 P.M. there was a light ground haze but the sky was practically clear with but scattered cumulous clouds. Darkness was encountered about 25 miles northeast of Peoria and I took up a compass course, checking on the lights of the towns below until a low fog rolled in under me a few miles northeast of Marseilles and the Illinois river.

"The fog extended from the ground up to about 600 feet and as I was unable to fly under it, I turned back and attempted to drop a flare and land. The flare did not function and I again headed for Maywood [Chicago's air-mail port] hoping to find a break in the fog over the field.

"Examination disclosed that the cause of the flare failure was the short length of the release lever and that the flare might still be used by pulling out the release cable.

"I continued on a compass course of 50 degrees until 7:15 P.M. when I saw a dull glow on top of the fog, indicating a town below. There were several of these light patches on the fog, visible only when looking away from the moon, and I knew them to be towns bordering Maywood.

"At no time, however, was I able to locate the exact position of the field, although I understand the searchlights were directed upward and two barrels of gasoline burned in an endeavor to attract my attention. Several times I descended to the top of the fog, which

was 800 to 900 feet high, according to my altimeter. The sky above was clear with the exception of scattered clouds and the moon and stars were shining bright. After circling around for 35 minutes, I headed west, clearing Lake Michigan, and in an attempt to pick up one of the lights on the transcontinental [the transcontinental air-mail route from Chicago to the Pacific Coast which was lighted in that vicinity].

"After flying west for 15 minutes and seeing no break, I turned southwest, hoping to strike the edge of the fog south of the Illinois river. My engine quit at 8:20 P.M. and I cut in the reserve. I was at that time only 1500 feet high and as the engine did not pick up as soon as I expected, I shoved the flashlight in my belt and was about to release the parachute flare and jump when the engine finally took hold again. A second trial showed the main tank to be dry and accordingly a maximum of 20 minutes flying time was left.

"There were no openings in the fog and I decided to leave the ship as soon as the reserve

tank was exhausted. I tried to get the mail pit open with the idea of throwing out the mail sacks and then jumping, but was unable to open the front buckle. I knew that the risk of fire, with no gasoline in the tanks, was very slight and began to climb for altitude when I saw a light on the ground for several seconds.

"This was the first light I had seen for nearly two hours and as almost enough gasoline for 15 minutes flying remained, I glided down to 1200 feet and pulled out the flare release cable as nearly as I could judge over the spot where the light had appeared. This time the flare functioned but only to illuminate the top of a solid bank of fog into which it soon disappeared without showing any trace of the ground.

"Seven minutes' gasoline remained in the gravity tank. Seeing the glow of a town through the fog, I turned toward the open country and nosed the plane up. At 5000 feet the engine sputtered and died. I stepped up on the cowling and out over the right side of the cockpit, pulling the rip cord after about

a 100-feet fall. The parachute, an Irving seat service type, functioned perfectly. I was falling head downward when the risers jerked me into an upright position and the parachute opened.

"This time I saved the rip cord.

"I pulled the flashlight from my belt and was playing it down toward the top of the fog when I heard the plane's engine pick up. When I jumped, it had practically stopped dead and I had neglected to cut the switches. Apparently when the ship nosed down an additional supply of gasoline drained to the carburetor. Soon she came into sight, about a quarter of a mile away headed in the general direction of my parachute.

"I put the flashlight in a pocket of my flying suit preparatory to slipping the parachute out of the way if necessary. The plane was making a left spiral of about a mile diameter and passed approximately 300 yards away from my parachute, leaving me on the outside of the circle.

"I was undecided as to whether the plane or

I was descending the more rapidly and glided my parachute away from the spiral path as rapidly as I could.

"The ship passed completely out of sight but reappeared again in a few seconds, its rate of descent being about the same as that of the parachute.

"I counted five spirals, each one a little further away than the last, before reaching the top of the fog bank.

"When I settled into the fog I knew that the ground was within 1000 feet and reached for the flashlight, but found it to be missing. I could see neither earth nor stars, and had no idea what kind of territory was below. I crossed my legs to keep from straddling a branch or wire, guarded my face with my hands and waited.

"Presently I saw the outline of the ground and a moment later was down in a cornfield. The corn was over my head and the parachute was lying on top of the cornstalks. I hurriedly packed it and started down a corn row. The ground visibility was about 100 yards. In a

few minutes I came to a stubble field and some wagon tracks which I followed to a farmyard a quarter of a mile away.

"After reaching the farmyard I noticed auto headlights playing over the roadside. Thinking that some one might have located the wreck of the plane, I walked over to the car. The occupants asked whether I had heard an airplane crash and it required some time to explain to them that I had been piloting the plane and yet was searching for it myself. I had to display the parachute as evidence before they were thoroughly convinced.

"The farmer was sure, as were most others in a three-mile radius, that the ship had just missed his house and crashed near by. In fact, he could locate within a few rods, the spot where he heard it hit the ground, and we spent an unsuccessful quarter of an hour hunting for the wreck in that vicinity before going to the farmhouse to arrange for a searching party and telephone St. Louis and Chicago.

"I had just put in the long distance calls

when the telephone rang and we were notified that the plane had been found in a cornfield over two miles away. It took several minutes to reach the site of the crash, due to the necessity of slow driving through the fog and a small crowd had already assembled when we arrived.

"The plane was wound up in a ball-shaped mass. It had narrowly missed one farmhouse and had hooked its left wing into a grain shock a quarter of a mile beyond.

"The ship had landed on the left wing and wheel and had skidded along the ground for 80 yards, going through one fence before coming to rest in the edge of a cornfield about 100 yards short of a barn. The mail pit was laid open and one sack of mail was on the ground. The mail, however, was uninjured.

"The sheriff from Ottawa arrived and we took the mail to the Ottawa post office to be entrained at 3:30 A.M. for Chicago."

His last emergency landing from a plane by parachute came about six weeks later. It was a drop from an altitude of 13,000 feet during

which he passed through snow and rain, and finally landed with wind howling around him, across a barbed-wire fence. Probably even Lindbergh's friends who insist that he is not "Lucky" would admit that good fortune was with him at the moment of his landing, at least, for he records that the barbs from the wire did not penetrate his clothing and he was not even scratched.

"I took off from Lambert-St. Louis Field at 4:20 P.M., November 3, arrived at Springfield, Ill., at 5:15 and after a five-minute stop for mail took the air again and headed for Peoria," he wrote in his official air-mail-service report.

"The 'ceiling' at Springfield was about 500 feet, and the weather report from Peoria, which was telephoned to St. Louis earlier in the afternoon, gave the flying conditions as entirely passable.

"I encountered darkness about 25 miles north of Springfield. The ceiling had lowered to around 400 feet and a light snow was falling. At South Pekin the forward visibility of

ground lights from a 150-foot altitude was less than one-half mile and over Pekin the town lights were indistinct from 200 feet above.

"After passing Pekin I flew at an altimeter reading of 600 feet for about five minutes, when the lightness of the haze below indicated I was over Peoria.

"Twice I could see lights on the ground and descended to less than 200 feet before they disappeared from view. I tried to bank around one group of lights, but was unable to turn quickly enough to keep them in sight.

"After circling in the vicinity I decided to try to find better weather conditions by flying northeast toward Chicago. I had ferried a ship from Chicago to St. Louis in the early afternoon and at that time the ceiling and visibility were much better near Chicago than elsewhere along the route.

"Enough gasoline for about one hour and ten minutes' flying remained in the main tank and twenty minutes in the reserve. This was hardly enough to return to St. Louis even had

I been able to navigate directly to the field by dead reckoning and flying blind the greater portion of the way.

"The only lights along our route at present are on the field at Peoria, consequently, unless I could pick up a beacon on the Transcontinental route my only alternative would be to drop the parachute flare and land by its light together with what little assistance the wing lights would be in the snow and rain. The territory toward Chicago was much more favorable for a night landing than that around St. Louis.

"I flew northeast at about 2000 feet for 30 minutes, then dropped down to 600 feet. There were numerous breaks in the clouds this time and occasionally ground lights could be seen from over 500 feet. I passed over the lights of a small town and a few minutes later came to a fairly clear place in the clouds. I pulled up to about 600 feet, released the parachute flare, whipped the ship around to get into the wind and under the flare which lighted at once, but instead of floating down slowly,

dropped like a rock. For an instant I saw the ground, then total darkness.

"My ship was in a steep bank and for a few seconds after being blinded by the intense light, I had trouble righting it. I then tried to find the ground with the wing lights, but their glare was worse than useless in the haze.

"When about ten minutes' gas remained in the pressure tank and still I could not see the faintest outline of any object on the ground I decided to leave the ship rather than attempt to land blindly.

"I turned back southwest toward less populated country and started climbing in an attempt to get over the clouds before jumping. The main tank went dry at 7:51 and the reserve at 8:10. The altimeter then registered approximately 14,000 feet yet the top of the clouds was apparently several thousand feet higher. I rolled the stabilizer, cut the switches, pulled the ship up into a stall, and was about to go out over the right side of the cockpit when the right wing began to drop. In this position the plane would gather speed and

spiral to the right, possibly striking my parachute after its first turn.

"I returned to the controls and after righting the plane, dove over the left side of the cockpit, while the airspeed registered about 70 miles per hour and the altimeter 13,000 feet.

"I pulled the rip cord immediately after clearing the stabilizer. The Irving chute functioned perfectly. I had left the ship head first and was falling in that position when the risers whipped me around into an upright position and the parachute opened.

"The last I saw or heard of the D.H. [his airplane] was as it disappeared into the clouds just after my parachute opened. I placed the rip cord in my pocket and took out my flashlight.

"It was snowing and very cold. For the first minute or so the parachute descended smoothly, then commenced an excessive oscillation which continued for about five minutes and which I was unable to check.

"The first indication that I was near the ground was a gradual darkening of the space

below. The snow had turned to rain and although my parachute was thoroughly soaked, its oscillation had greatly decreased.

"I directed the beam of the 500-foot spotlight downward but the ground appeared so suddenly that I landed directly on top of a barbed wire fence without seeing it. The fence helped to break my fall and the barbs did not penetrate the heavy flying suit.

"The parachute was blown over the fence and was held open for some time by the gusts of wind before collapsing. I rolled it up into its pack and started toward the nearest light.

"Soon I came to a road which I followed about a mile to the town of Covell, Illinois, where I telephoned a report to St. Louis and endeavored to obtain some news of where the ship had landed. The only information that I could obtain was from one of a group of farmers in the general store, a Mr. Thompson, who stated that his neighbor had heard the plane crash but could only guess at its general direction.

"I rode with Mr. Thompson to his farm and

after leaving the parachute in his house, we canvassed the neighbors for any information concerning the plane. After searching for over an hour without result I left instructions to place a guard over the mail in case it was found before I returned and went to Chicago for another ship.

"On arriving over Covell the next morning I found the wreck with a small crowd gathered about it less than 500 feet back of the house where I had left the parachute.

"The nose and wheels had struck the ground at about the same time and after sliding along for about seventy-five feet it had piled up in the pasture beside a hedge fence. One wheel had come off and was standing inflated against the wall of the inside of a hog house a hundred yards further on. It had gone through two fences and the wall of the house.

"The wings were badly splintered but the tubular fuselage, although badly bent in places, had held its general form even in the mailpit. The parachute from the flare was hanging on the tailskid.

"There were three sacks of mail in the plane. One, a full bag, from St. Louis, had been split open and some of the mail oil-soaked but legible. The other two were only partly full and were undamaged.

"I delivered the mail to Maywood by plane to be dispatched on the next ships out."

Experiences such as the two parachute leaps just described, seemed to be the things which Lindbergh enjoyed and which held him to the mail service and to flying.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE GREAT IDEA

BY the fall of 1926 Lindbergh was beginning to feel that the thrills were rapidly being exhausted from flying the night mail between St. Louis and Chicago. He had had about all the experiences that even such a hazardous occupation as his could afford, short of actual disaster. He had conquered snow, sleet and fog. He had fought his way through head winds. He had pitted himself against unruly or poorly built planes and had won out. He had run up a record of approximately 1,700 hours of actual flying in about five years' time. None of those hours had been of any conservative variety unless, perhaps, while he was a student in the army schools in Texas. Most of it had been done in exhibition tours of the west, in commercial aviation out of St. Louis and with the night mail. Yet in all of that

time and despite all of the crises he had met, he never had been injured. Neither had he been involved in an accident in which others were injured save once at St. Louis when Guerney, a parachute jumper, broke his arm. In fact, Lindbergh himself completed his flight to Paris and made his flying record amount to approximately 1,850 hours in the air, without ever being injured or being ill enough to require medical attention. His family reports that only once in his life has a doctor attended him and that was when he had the measles in boyhood.

His associates say that when he was beginning to tire of the air mail and the government lighted the route between St. Louis and Chicago, making it comparatively safe for flying, he became restless. It was about that time—the fall of 1926—that he conceived the idea of flying across the Atlantic. Just when he determined upon the plan, however, no one knows exactly. His closest friends are inclined to feel it was but a step in the evolution of the man. He desired to surpass in aviation,

was confident that he could and it seemed that flying to Paris was the next logical step in his program.

As soon as Lindbergh suggested his plan to that group of flyers with whom he lived at St. Louis it was taken seriously. All of his associates had entire confidence that the Paris flight was feasible for a man of Lindbergh's skill and courage, if he had an airplane which matched the pilot. But there was the question of money. To buy a machine of the right sort and to finance such an undertaking would be costly.

Lindbergh, having determined upon his plan, went about it in his customary unostentatious and businesslike way. He consulted Major William B. Robertson, of the Robertson Aircraft Company, his immediate employer, and outlined to him his idea. That, according to Robertson, was December 27, 1926.

"He had his scheme well worked out," said Major Robertson. "I found that even then, the first time he had mentioned the plan to me,

he knew what sort of a plane he wanted. He had convinced himself that a single-motored machine was the best. He had many of the details of how he proposed to accomplish the flight, clearly in his mind.

"We talked the matter over and then called in my brother, Lieutenant Frank Robertson, and later the plan was discussed with one of the reporters from a St. Louis newspaper who gave us good advice."

January 9, 1927, a conference of men interested in Lindbergh's project was held in St. Louis. Harry H. Knight, a young broker who was interested in flying, joined Robertson, Lindbergh and others who were anxious to see the project carried through.

It was decided that $15,000 would be needed for immediate financing. If that amount could be raised, Lindbergh would embark immediately toward consummation of his plans. He had saved $2,000 from the money he had made flying and he advanced those savings as the first contribution. Incidentally, with the flight successfully concluded, it was found that

Lindbergh's $2,000 still represented the largest amount invested in the project by any one man. Robertson advanced $1,000 and then Knight enlisted the assistance of Harold Bixby, secretary of the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce. The two secured $15,000 on notes at a St. Louis bank and proceeded to underwrite the amount among St. Louis business men. They took subscriptions of from $500 to $1,000 from many persons, including Major Albert Bond Lambert, J. D. Lambert, Earl C. Thompson, the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat,* and Harry F. Knight, father of the younger Knight.

The money thus raised was placed on deposit to the credit of Lindbergh's flight committee and the boy who only a few years before had been dreaming back in Little Falls, Minnesota, of winging his way to far-off lands, was actually on the way to the fulfillment of his dreams.

Lindbergh, among members of his family, has the reputation of being careful with his money and his management of expenditures of

the funds advanced for his flight seems to bear out the reputation. The $15,000 proved ample. Up to the moment he arrived in Paris he had expended but $13,500 of the fund and the remainder still was on deposit in St. Louis. Compared to the amounts spent by others in flight projects, Lindbergh's expenditure was almost negligible, outside of the cost of the airplane.

With the flight financed Lindbergh announced to his associates that he would choose a monoplane being manufactured in New York for the flight. But when he arrived in New York to arrange for the machine he was unable to come to satisfactory terms. So he broke off negotiations quickly and left for San Diego, California, where the Ryan Aircraft Company was manufacturing a Ryan monoplane, much similar to the machine he had selected. In San Diego he met B. F. Mahoney, president of the Ryan Company. Mahoney was twenty-six years old and Lindbergh was twenty-five. The idea of building an airplane for a flight to Paris appealed to the imagina-

tion of Mahoney as strongly as the idea of flying did to Lindbergh. Mahoney entered whole-heartedly into the scheme and work began immediately upon the plane which later was named "Spirit of St. Louis" and went winging away to France.

The original estimate of the cost of the plane made by the Ryan Company was $14,000 and the sale price was to be $25,000 which would include most of the equipment and allow for payment for royalties and other overhead costs as well as profit. But the final agreement was that Lindbergh would get the plane for $10,500.

His machine arranged for and construction started, Lindbergh was ready to devote all his energies to watching the construction of the airplane and to preparing himself for the flight. He wasted no time building an elaborate organization, engaged no publicity men, had no staff of managers, and established no offices or other connections. Whatever management the flight required, he took care of himself.

CHAPTER TWELVE

SAN DIEGO

WHEN Lindbergh arrived in San Diego, California, in the early part of 1927 he had shut out of his thoughts everything excepting his one purpose, flying to Paris. For the next two months he brought to bear remarkable powers of concentration and it might be said that in those two months the Paris flight was made and that when he sailed over the Atlantic to France it was merely a mechanical process, much as the building of a house after an architect has drawn the plans, is but the mechanic's task which follows the work of an artist.

He shared a small apartment with A. J. Edwards, who also was interested in flying, but whose interest had not carried him to the heights to which it carried Lindbergh. He spent his days at the flying field or at the air-

craft factory, testing and watching the building of the plane which was destined to become perhaps the most famous flying machine since the Wright Brothers built their first "airship." His nights were spent in study.

Almost his only relaxation was the exercise of his sense of humor. This usually took the form of practical jokes and in those two months at San Diego many an unsuspecting mechanic suddenly found himself the victim of Lindbergh's pranks.

He laid down for himself a rigid program designed not only to produce a plan of flight which would make success certain but which would render him fit physically and mentally for the task he had to face.

When Lindbergh, without pomp or ceremony, flew away from New York for Paris, alone and seemingly without preparation, there was an impression that here was a foolhardy young man, doing something amazing in its daring which merited the name of "Lucky," so often applied to him by the press.

But the public had not seen Lindbergh at

San Diego. Immediately upon arrival there he had plunged himself into his work. He cast aside all social life of every sort and kind.

"He spent his spare time reading, studying, talking of aviation, and taking long walks," Edwards, his roommate, said.

His preparation of plans for the flight seemed to cover every conceivable emergency. He considered the obstacles he would have to face from every possible angle and then worked out his plans to meet each contingency.

When he had exhausted his own store of ideas on the subject of what might bring failure to his project, he began carrying with him a little notebook. When any skeptic would suggest that the flight would fail for this reason or for that, or he would read of some new difficulty of overseas flying, or some expert would write of the impossibility of spanning the Atlantic, he would note the argument advanced in this notebook.

Then, in the quiet of his room, he would give careful consideration to each possible cause

of failure advanced. With painstaking care he would devise a scheme for meeting the particular obstacle suggested to him. Only when a complete plan for meeting the contingency had been devised would Lindbergh scratch the notation from his book.

When Lindbergh received his maps, his books and data on navigation and his charts of the Atlantic and the Newfoundland coast, he went into virtual seclusion for a period of ten days. He would work late into the night. He only gave up his study of these books and charts for meals and for a few hours' sleep at night. It was during that period that he worked out his plan of flight, the course from New York to Newfoundland and thence across the Atlantic over the Great Circle from St. Johns, Newfoundland, which he followed with such unerring accuracy.

That done, he had one more step in his preparation before he would feel himself both mentally and physically equipped for the flight. He had not neglected the possibility, of which there was much discussion immediately before

his departure, that he would be overcome by sleep before Paris could be attained. He decided that he must test his own ability to fight off drowsiness.

Accordingly he began a series of tests. First he remained awake and at work for twenty-four hours. Then he extended the period to thirty hours and finally to thirty-five and then to forty hours. He satisfied himself that he was capable not only of remaining awake a sufficient time to permit the flight, but to retain his powers of concentration and his strength.

Then there was the problem of equipment for the plane. He carefully considered each item. He selected only the instruments which he believed he would be required to use in flying the course he had picked and in the methods which he would follow. He chose an earth inductor compass and did away with a sextant after satisfying himself that he would be safe in relying entirely upon compass navigation and would not find other instruments necessary.

Each item that went into the equipment of the plane was similarly studied.

But in all this period of intense concentration on the project ahead of him, which kept him at his work on an average of fourteen hours a day, he did not for a moment lose any of the charming youthfulness which so graced him in New York before he started, and still more in Paris when fame was his.

He became, according to his associates, an inveterate raider of the ice box in the quarters where he lived. He indulged an almost childish appetite for candy and for sweets. On the long walks which were a part of his preparation, he always carried a pocketful of candy.

At the flying field he would break a long period of testing and inspection by perpetrating some practical joke upon an unsuspecting mechanic. His favorite form of torment for the men who went about with hammer, screw driver and wrench, was to give them friendly shoves while some kindred soul knelt behind them. He would laugh gayly as they went tumbling to the ground. It was boy's play by

a man who was about to stun the world with his daring.

San Diego hardly knew that Lindbergh was there. He said nothing and by his own reticence imposed a similar though voluntary silence.

"He was the most perfect man I have ever known," A. J. Edwards, who roomed with him, said. "He had no bad habits unless perhaps his mania for practical jokes. He was clean-cut and straight-forward at all times. He was a model which the rising generation well could follow."

Edwards added the fact that Lindbergh was not a "woman hater."

"He never seemed to care for the company of girls," Edwards said. "Only once during the entire time we lived together did he ever have a date with a girl and then he made me promise that I would not say anything about his proposed flight to Paris. He didn't want any heroics thrown in.

"He didn't dislike women in any way, but girls seemed to have no place in his plans for

his flight and flying to Paris was his entire life for the time being."

The time when his plans and his plane would be completed was rapidly approaching. Here and there people were beginning to take notice of him, although it was largely just a curious interest in a man who was so set upon attempting what seemed so nearly an impossible thing as flying 2,500 miles from San Diego to New York and then 3,600 miles more, over water, to Paris, alone and almost without outside aid in his preparations.

A dinner was given one night at which Lindbergh essayed to explain to a group of army and navy fliers the plan he had in mind. On a blackboard in front of the diners were diagrams of airplanes and a drawing of his own Ryan monoplane, with the letters which had been assigned to it "N. Y. P." on the wings. Some one noting the letters wrote in "Nervy Young Pilot."

Lindbergh began his discussion of the flight and noted the inscription.

"Nervy young pilot," he read. "Well, I

guess that's right. I must be a nervy young pilot trying to tell you veteran navigators about navigation."

After his flight to Paris it was probable that many of those present that night recalled the remark and were willing to concede the right of Lindbergh to lecture them upon navigation, for it was his skill in that science which won half the battle for him.

Through all this preparatory period he was thorough to a point where he exasperated some of those who worked with him, but never for a moment did he give any sign that there was a thought in his mind that he would not succeed. He seemed confident that whatever obstacle he might encounter, he could work out a plan to meet it.

Reports of others planning to fly from New York to Paris did not bother him in the least. He followed their activities with interest, but only with the detached interest of any aviator in the work of any other aviator engaged in a major project.

It was not until the day when his plans and

his plane both were considered by Lindbergh himself as perfected, that he showed the least signs of impatience. Then when the weather reports showed unfavorable flying conditions for two successive days, he became anxious. But finally a morning came when the flying conditions were good.

On that morning Lindbergh arose, a buoyant, happy youth. He breakfasted heartily. He was laughing and happy, and seemed not to have a care in the world.

At the flying field the mechanics wheeled out his shining plane and began filling the tanks with gasoline to carry it to St. Louis. The process was tedious and consumed much time. Lindbergh, about to begin his greatest adventure, was plainly anxious to be away. He seemed just a bit nervous.

Then some one reminded him, or he learned, that there was on the field a "Hawk," a type of plane he had never flown.

A few moments later the watchers looked into the sky and there they saw Lindbergh soaring and looping above them in this plane

which was unlike any he had ever flown before.

It was just another of the perversities of this amazing youth. About to launch on an effort that would shake the whole world, he was whiling away the time in an impetuous airplane ride, taking what seemed to others foolhardy chances in a strange plane and cavorting in it through the air, as gayly as if he were but out for a morning horseback ride on some spirited pony.

Not until the tanks were filled was he ready to come down to the earth once more. Then, with a smile and all the assurance that a man could have, he climbed into his cockpit and soared away.

Seventeen hours later the world heard that he had arrived in St. Louis, three hours ahead of his schedule and had made the longest nonstop airplane flight that any man had ever made alone.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

NEW YORK

THE eyes of the world were fixed on that great stage upon which the scene was set for the transatlantic flight. Fate had thwarted every attempt and even every preparation as if a tragic destiny had foredoomed the venture to failure. Fonck had come to disaster before leaving the runway. Byrd, conqueror of the North Pole, had crashed on a preparatory flight. Davis had fallen to his death in a Virginia swamp while testing his airplane. The intrepid Frenchmen, Nungesser and Coli, had hurled themselves out over the North Atlantic, never to be heard from again.

People who talked of the projected great flight which was to link two worlds were moved by the impulse to lower their voices. It seemed a Lost Cause—lost before it could be fought.

Hope was revived when the Bellanca airplane made its record endurance flight, weaving about tirelessly above New York for many more hours than it would take to fly to Paris. Here was an entrant of new hope. The machine which man made could do it. It but remained to prove that man was as tenacious as his machine.

Then Byrd arrived at Roosevelt Field with his new Fokker airplane with its gigantic wing spread, its triple motors, and its highly trained crew. The Bellanca airplane with its record and the Byrd expedition with its science and skill gave the projected flight once more an atmosphere of having a fighting chance. The attention of the world was focused on Roosevelt Field, awaiting the start of the sporting event of the age.

Few had heeded the word from San Diego that an unknown named Lindbergh was also planning the flight. It seemed hardly credible when, with an ease that was almost nonchalant, he crossed the continent in two great, graceful hops. Out of an evening sky his beautiful

white monoplane appeared over Curtiss Field and settled to a perfect landing.

Lindbergh had arrived. His tall lithe form emerged from the machine's cockpit. He stood up beside his airplane and greeted the first to reach him with his shy friendly grin. With that grin the world made him its own. With that intuitive sense possessed only by people *en masse,* that miraculous sense which crystallizes amazingly into public opinion, the lone flier out of the west was recognized at once. Here was the hero of this modern machine age.

He was no plumed knight trailing romance from a musty Camelot. He was an American youth, as modern as the shining plane from which he emerged. He had spanned the continent on machine-made wings. He was of the very stuff and spirit of to-day. Guided by his sensitive fingers machinery had become a thing of life and fancy. In him the human element was arisen again and the machine was but its manifestation.

He was recognized as a hero chiefly because

there was nothing of the heroic about him. He had leaped from the Pacific to the Atlantic as casually as the commuter goes to work of a morning. As casually, almost, he was about to leap on again to Paris. Shy, unassuming, confident, he stood beside his airplane, the epitome of what every man of to-day could wish himself to seem.

Other men, many of them, bold, experienced, famous aviators, had schemed and planned and some even attempted a flight between New York and Paris. Powerful airplanes had been constructed. Intricate instruments had been assembled. The most thorough preparations had been made. But here was Lindbergh, ready to make the flight alone and in a single motored airplane. It was plain, moreover, that he was not mad or reckless. It was plain that he knew what he was doing. He knew he could fly.

The drama in it spread from Curtiss Field to every corner of the earth. It was incredible. It was perfect.

But if there was drama in that moment to

cause a hundred million hearts to beat faster, Lindbergh himself was not conscious of it. He was all business. His first thought was of his airplane, as a veteran trooper's is always of his horse. Byrd, Chamberlin, Acosta, great and famous flyers, pressed forward to be among those to congratulate the young newcomer. But amid all the excitement, as darkness lowered over the field, Lindbergh's thought was still of his airplane. In the row of hangars along the margin of the field he noted one was lighted and promptly suggested his airplane be housed in that one. He wanted to be able to work on his airplane by night as well as by day. And that night, while the world was still breathless from his amazing appearance in the center of the transatlantic stage, he was greasy-faced and whistling, happily tinkering with his airplane.

He knew every nut and bolt of The Spirit of St. Louis. To him it was a thing alive. Later he was always to refer to himself and it as "we." It was almost a part of him. It was almost as if its wings were on his own

shoulders and its propulsive power his own heart and lungs. He could fly.

Already the unknown was the favorite in the race. People would not have been surprised had this amazing youth taken off next day for Paris as confidently as he had taken off from St. Louis for New York the day after flying from San Diego. But though the hero-worshiping crowd was already adoring the new idol, he was made of sounder stuff than was imagined. While a Sunday throng of visitors was warded off by armed guards, because so many were anxious "just to touch Lindbergh, to get some of his luck," the man himself was plotting his flight with no reliance on luck. He was the finished workman. It was not for him to leap off into the air on a blind chance. He had planned every detail of this flight for months. He studied weather charts, inspected his airplane, and bided his time. When he left for Paris he expected to go all the way.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

WAITING TO GO

THERE is a story that the German general staff had nothing to do but sleep for the first ten days after hostilities broke out. Their plan of mobilization and attack had been so thoroughly worked out that there was nothing to do but open the secret file of orders and distribute them to telegraph operators. The army moved like a self directed machine throughout the opening stages of the Great War, operating on schedules drafted during years of laborious staff work preceding the War.

It was something like this with Lindbergh after his arrival in New York. Everything connected with his flight had been carefully thought out in San Diego. He now had but to await propitious weather. He was care free, relaxed. Being confident he did not

fume and worry or become nervously impatient. He simply waited. And his astounding lack of pose, his complete failure to dramatize himself, gave the watching public still another thrill.

He saw himself as a young man going about his business and his business had chanced to bring him to New York and apparently was shortly to take him to Paris. He conducted himself as unassumingly as if he had arrived by train instead of through the air, the bearer of a name which already was echoing back and forth across the ocean he planned to fly.

Reporters, photographers, autograph seekers, thousands of the merely curious, and a parasitic host of those who sought to establish financial connections with his flight, eddied and swirled about him. He was courteous, pleasant, but uncommunicative. He liked to talk about flying and the various means of flying but he had small bent toward other forms of communication.

His every trait, as it appeared to observers, was catalogued and spread over the public

press. His engaging likeness was photographed innumerable times. Feminine reporters painted him as a blond young god and their male brethren waxed eloquent over his flying capacities. Never had blasé New York been so suddenly stirred by a visitor. But he remained unaffected. His modesty was so real that he subscribed to a newspaper clipping bureau, so that, in the event that he flew to Paris, "his mother would be sure to have some press notices for her scrap book."

To ingenious promoters who beseiged him with offers to appear in the movies, go on the stage, do lecture tours, or endorse soaps, he was smilingly adamant. His project was to fly to Paris. Flying was his business. He had not planned to enter the movies. He had had one aim during most of his life—to fly, and to fly better. That still was his aim.

Every one in the flying colony around Curtiss and Roosevelts fields was immediately his friend. His rivals in the Byrd and Bellanca camps whole-heartedly wished him well and gladly put at his disposal the equipment and

assistance inherent in their completely equipped flight headquarters. He conferred with Byrd on navigation because he recognized in Byrd one of the world's leading air navigation authorities. And he discussed with great interest with Chamberlin the latter's record endurance flight. But his friendly contacts were not only with these. He speedily knew every mechanic around the fields. Even the keeper of the hot dog stand was able to call him by his first name. When Lindbergh left for Paris he left on the field behind him the same heartfelt Godspeed which would have followed him had he arisen from the airport at San Diego or St. Louis.

It was clear that his paramount interest was aviation. He voiced few views on other subjects. But let some one mention some angle of flying and he was all interest. When he had hours of leisure he wanted to get into the air. An opportunity to fly to New Jersey presented itself and he was off with all the enthusiasm of a first flight. He flew over to visit the Wright plant and spent delightful

hours investigating the manufacture of aviation motors. This was something like it. Thousands of hero worshipers were wandering about Curtiss Field, hoping for a sight of him, but he was content to watch fine steel take shape in an engine which enabled men to soar.

Apart from this vital interest in flying, he seemed just a boy during those days in New York. Later it was to appear that he possessed poise and tact and taste the equal of the most distinguished diplomat. But all that appeared only when necessity arose for it. He was like one of the airplanes he admired so much. He carried no waste weight. For the moment little was demanded of him. Therefore, without vanity, he was not moved to exhibition.

When ten years old he had visited New York. Now at the age of twenty-five, already a public figure such as few men of twenty-five in the history of the world had been, he visited New York in much the same manner as that boy of ten. On that other visit he had hugely enjoyed Coney Island. He repeated the visit

this time, and enjoyed it just as much. To the complete mystification of thousands who might be wondering what a distinguished flier does to while away a holiday, he did Coney Island from one end to the other. He rode the roller coasters and the shoot-the-chutes again and again. Thrills for the one man to be a four star member of the Caterpillar Club! He ate hot dogs and candy with a boy's relish. He walked the Board Walk with a toy giraffe stuck in his hat. He played with the complete abandon known only to the boy.

His other chief New York diversion was attendance at the movies. After spending the day watching weather maps, tinkering on his airplane, and talking aviation with any one from whom he thought he might learn something new, he wandered over to New York at night to drop into a picture show. There the man about whom the city was talking might have been seen taking his place at the foot of a line to wait his turn to buy a ticket at the box office. On the flying fields he was all but mobbed by admirers every time he appeared.

He enjoyed mixing unobtrusively with the crowds on Broadway, unrecognized among the thousands thronging up and down the great street of entertainment.

Returning toward midnight on May 19 to his hotel at Garden City he asked the night clerk "to call him at 2:15." It was his only announcement to the anxious world that he was about to hop off. Wires and cables the world around hummed and buzzed with the news but he went calmly to bed to get a couple of hours sleep before his great adventure. He had decided upon inspecting the afternoon weather reports that probably he could start the next morning. Then he had gone calmly to New York to a movie. Upon his return the night reports had fulfilled his expectations. So the night clerk was to awake him early.

Behind that incredible lack of fluster were those long weeks of intensive preparation at San Diego. He had left San Diego fully prepared. His pause at New York had been merely a pause like his overnight stop at St.

Louis. His flight was really from San Diego to Paris.

After two hours of sleep he went to the field to superintend the fueling of his plane. It had not taken him long to gather his personal baggage. He picked up a couple of sandwiches from a wagon lunch stand. In his pockets were a return ticket from France and letters of introduction to several people in Paris, including Ambassador Herrick. He had explained to friends on this side that he "knew no one in Paris and would like some introductions to some people who might show him around a little inasmuch as he talked no French."

So he took with him letters of introduction.

And already there was gathering in Paris that spirit of wild welcoming acclaim such as few kings have ever received.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE MACHINE

THE Ryan monoplane, in which Lindbergh was to embark on his great adventure, was one of the most beautiful aircraft ever to take the air as it was trundled out that morning to the Roosevelt Field runway. Lindbergh loved the silver-gray craft with a mingling of the affection a horseman feels for a thoroughbred horse and the pride a sea captain takes in his ship. He had selected the model, had watched over its construction, and he knew its capabilities as well as he knew his own.

But there was more than sentiment in his regard for the airplane. In those long hours of study and preparation at San Diego he had gone over again and again all those details of its construction which, taken together, satisfied him of its airworthiness for a New York to Paris flight.

The Ryan monoplane was forty-six feet from wing tip to wing tip, and thirty-four feet from nose to tail; its wings were seven feet wide; its gross weight, loaded for the Paris flight, was 5,150 pounds; it carried 451 gallons of gasoline, and twenty-eight gallons of oil; its wing loading when taking off with the full Paris flight load was sixteen pounds per square foot; its maximum speed with the full Paris load was 123 miles per hour and under these conditions it had a cruising speed of 106 miles per hour; and its minimum speed with the full load was sixty-nine miles per hour.

The machine was driven by a single Wright "Whirlwind" motor of 225 horse power—a nine cylinder, radial, air-cooled motor—set in the prow of the plane.

These were the basic mechanical factors upon which Lindbergh depended for the success of his flight, factors more or less comprehensible even to the layman.

There were several unique features in the design of the airplane. For one thing, Lindbergh had ordered the huge gas tank placed in front

of his seat in the tiny cockpit. This made it impossible for him to see forward except by the aid of a periscope.

There was considerable unthinking criticism, at the time, of this feature of the airplane's design. But like everything else connected with the expedition it was the result of the most careful forethought.

"I didn't need to see forward," explained Lindbergh later, "while flying on long flights such as those between San Diego and St. Louis, and the rest of the way to Paris. In the air I was guided not by what I could see but by the instruments in the cockpit. Only when landing did I need to see a bit and the periscope served for that.

"Having the gas tank forward gave the plane a better balance. It was also safer. In the event of a crash the great weight of the tank would be thrown forward. If the pilot were in front of it he would surely be crushed. Sitting behind it he was infinitely safer."

So much for the forethought of the youthful flier whose very modesty and unaffectedness

caused him to be given the nicknames of "The Flyin' Fool" and "Lucky."

Another strange impression became current during those days when Lindbergh was attending the movies to while away the time before weather conditions made his start advisable. It was that Lindbergh was flying without regard for navigation or appropriate instruments.

On the instrument board of his airplane there were the following:

Earth Inductor Compass—that ingenious electric device by means of which a needle once adjusted on the point of destination of a long flight warns the pilot instantly by its declinations when he is straying from the direct route to that destination.

Turn and Bank Indicator—to inform the pilot when he is flying straight or when he is turning; this is important particularly when flying in clouds and fog.

Magnetic Compass—the common compass, indicating the direction of the magnetic pole.

Rate of Climb Indicator—showing the rate

of climb or descent in hundred feet per minute.

Air Speed Indicator—giving the speed of the airplane through the air in miles per hour.

Tachometer—showing the speed of the engine.

Thermometer—registering the heat of the motor.

Oil Pressure Gauge—showing the reading in pounds per square inch.

Altimeter—showing the height of the airplane above the ground.

Electric Clock.

The board was electric lighted.

All these instruments were thoroughly tested by experts of the Pioneer Instrument Company repeatedly during the days before Lindbergh took off.

As evidence of Lindbergh's air navigating ability, he had flown at night from San Diego to St. Louis and had approached his destination hardly a mile off his course. Later he was to show an even more uncanny ability to hold to his course. Many spoke of his "luck" or of his "flying instinct." Lindbergh himself ascribed

most of his success to the earth induction compass and to careful watching of his drift off the course it indicated.

The above brief sketch of Lindbergh's aircraft indicates the material with which he had to work on his tremendous venture. The airplane was a material thing of steel and wood and fabric. But with his hands on the controls it became a thing of life. He felt this so keenly that later he always spoke of "we" when speaking of his flight. "We"—meaning the plane and himself as an almost inseparable unit.

But after all it was Lindbergh who flew the Atlantic. Fabric wings and a sturdy motor supported but it was the keen brain which had planned every inch of the flight in advance, it was the steady, experienced hands which communicated a marvelous flying sense through the controls, it was the high spirit which could delight in such a leap alone, it was the unswerving courage which never wavered through long hours of rain and sleet and fog over the night sea—it was these qualities in the man which carried the venture onward irresistibly to success.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE START

LINDBERGH'S decision to start was as unostentatious as his sudden arrival in New York had been. But like his arrival the most unerring sense of showmanship could not have made it more dramatic. He had simply gone to bed after asking to be called in two hours.

Newspapermen, who had been watching day and night for the moment he should be ready to go, realized what he meant. The word sped over wires and soon newspapers were on the street in San Francisco, and London, and Buenos Aires, and Chicago, and London, and Paris, proclaiming the fact that Lindbergh was to go in the morning.

In that mysterious manner in which news permeates New York in the small hours of the morning, traveling faster than it seems

credible material means can carry it, hundreds of belated amusement seekers in night clubs heard of it and were drawn to a source of more exciting entertainment than was to be found in their usual haunts. The roads to Roosevelt Field were soon crowded with traffic as taxicabs and limousines raced to get their occupants to a post of observation.

A thousand or more observers of a more faithful category had remained at the field throughout the night on the chance that Lindbergh might decide to go. When the whisper spread that he had requested to be called at two in the morning their wakefulness was rewarded.

Figures well known in the field of aviation gathered about Lindbergh's hangar. Mechanics appeared. The hangar housing the silver-gray monoplane was lighted and mechanics busied themselves with inspection.

The crowd of eager watchers increased. Mere shadows in the darkness they were, but they typified the interest of a whole world.

Lindbergh appeared in the lobby of his

hotel, rubbing his eyes drowsily like a little boy aroused at an unusual hour from his slumbers. He had had but two hours sleep since early the previous morning. He was destined to have no more sleep for thirty-nine long hours. But he seemed as little excited as if he were merely being aroused to fly a leg of the mail route in his days as an air-mail pilot.

Red flares were flaming near the hangar as a signal that the flight was to start. Every moment the crowd was growing and stirring with increasing excitement. It was cold and as black as pitch beyond the glare of the flares.

By the time Lindbergh reached the hangar it had started to rain, apparently an ill omen. He philosophically sought refuge in a limousine standing near by and patiently waited.

The ill advised among the onlookers began to discuss the probability that the flight would be called off. Lindbergh had waited a week for clear weather and surely he would not fly off in the rain. One of Lindbergh's advisers, however, declared he was certain to leave since

weather reports indicated nearly ideal flying conditions throughout the length of the route to Paris.

The shower passed and all breathed easier. Preparations had hardly been resumed when another downpour began. This one caused the first evidence of discouragement among Lindbergh's aides. His confidence did not waver, however, and presently the rain again ceased.

The spectators, cold and dripping, shivered and whispered as they watched the methodical preparations and craned their necks for every glimpse of the tall slim young man who was the center of this seemingly ominous activity. Man's courage is lowest in that hour before the dawn. To many it seemed much like the grave preparations for an execution. With the break of dawn this boy was to be hurled into the air on a venture from which the most optimistic authorities felt he had at best but an even chance of descending alive.

At four the monoplane was wheeled out of its hangar. Lindbergh, dressed for flying

with his helmet over his head, crawled into the cockpit. Two trucks took the airplane in tow and the strange procession was on its way to Roosevelt Field.

The crowd cheered and ran behind and alongside while mechanics lighted the way with electric torches. Other spectators rushed to their automobiles and dashed by road toward the other field, getting themselves into a traffic jam in the darkness which was long being unraveled.

The first gray of a foggy dawn broke in the east as the towed airplane appeared on a slight rise of ground to the gaze of those waiting at Roosevelt Field. Lindbergh was to use the great runway prepared for Commander Byrd. This was but one of the many ways his rivals of the Byrd and Bellanca camps extended sportsmanlike aid to the youngster from the west.

It was cold and damp. Men and women in evening clothes shivered with thrills never to be experienced in the amusement spots of New York they had forsaken.

The ground was wet but firm in most places. It had grown quite light.

Lindbergh no longer smiled. His lips had set firmly and his eyes were grim. No one knew better than he, because no one had studied the subject more thoroughly, the risk he was seeking in venturing out over the Atlantic with the steadiness of a single motor the only barrier between him and oblivion.

He had eaten a sandwich for breakfast. He was taking two more to sustain him on his flight, together with a bottle of water. It seemed inadequate fare. But again he knew what he was doing. He had discovered by experiment that it was easier to remain awake when hungry.

Byrd asked if he could be of any assistance and then, finding there was nothing he could do, asked if it would disturb Lindbergh if he took his big Fokker on a trial flight. Naturally it would not. Nothing could make Lindbergh feel more at ease than to hear the thrum and whirr of aircraft over the field.

The time taken by preparations seemed end-

less. Mechanics were filling the tank with gas as the trim monoplane stood at the end of the long runway. Others were once more inspecting every detail of the airplane's construction, looking for the slightest flaw.

Few men face the climax of their life at twenty-five. Lindbergh faced his this cold, foggy morning on Roosevelt Field. Months of planning, and preparing, and dreaming, were about to culminate in failure or success. Failure meant death. Success meant—he little realized then all it would mean. But he knew it would mean supreme satisfaction for him. He was a flier and to fly the Atlantic from New York to Paris, the greatest feat so far accomplished in the world of aviation, would be to him the fulfillment of dreams first entertained in that boyhood bicycle seat in the tree top.

Police cleared the runway of spectators. Those clustered too near the airplane were pushed back.

Lindbergh was very grim. The moment was approaching. He conversed with several

of his advisers and backers in low tones. His face was like a mask in its set expression of determination. Here was no longer the shyly grinning youth who had gone to the movies. Here was the true spirit of the man gleaming from his narrowed eyes. The adventurer, the fighter, the conqueror.

The motor was warmed up, its whirling cylinders shooting brilliant flames about the bright aluminum prow of the airplane. Lindbergh strapped on his helmet, took his seat in the tiny cockpit, and closed the little door between him and the world of other men. From now on he was alone. No man could help him. It was his lone struggle, his to win or lose unassisted.

The big moment had come.

The motor's exhaust rose to a thunderous roar. Mechanics jerked the blocks from the wheels. The heavy airplane moved, gathered momentum, rolled ever more swiftly down the runway.

Never before had The Spirit of St. Louis carried the full load of gasoline it now bore.

His own careful calculations were Lindbergh's only assurance that it could lift the full 5,150 pounds from the ground. Even those calculations had indicated so narrow a margin of safety that he had never attempted a trial flight with full load. It was a chance he decided not to take except with a successful launching of his Paris flight as the reward of accomplishment.

It would have been natural to have taken off to the westward where in the event the airplane refused to rise there was an open field beyond and a margin of safety in which to slow down the airplane's speed. But when leaving San Diego Lindbergh had set his face toward Paris. He had never turned aside or looked back. He did not now. He took off eastward on the runway. If the airplane did not leave the ground he would crash into buildings at its end. If it left too slowly there were overhead wires that threatened. But Lindbergh took off toward Paris. It seemed as if he would countenance no failure, certainly no retreat.

The crowd cheered madly as the airplane began to move. Many of the more excitable began to run after it. But then the cheering died away. Two thousand spectators stood silent and breathless. Lurching and bounding, The Spirit of St. Louis was far down the runway. The rain-softened earth seemed clinging to its wheels. It looked oddly heavy and earthbound, like a bug which crawls instead of a winged creature which flies.

Even the uninitiate comprehended the disaster that was imminent. Experienced aviators who understood fully watched and prayed incoherently. Lindbergh, himself, had known more certainly than any that this was to be the greatest test of the whole flight.

On this same runway, a few months before, Réné Fonck, the great French ace, had crashed and two of his gallant crew had died because his over-weighted airplane had refused to lift from the ground in the same way a steeplechasing horse sometimes refuses to jump.

The Spirit of St. Louis was now two-thirds of the way down the runway. Then its tail

lifted and it bounced. But it immediately clung again to the earth. Again it bounced. And again it clung to the earth.

"God help him," groaned many in the tense crowd of spectators.

The buildings loomed directly ahead. The bouncing airplane seemed already to have proved it would not leave the ground.

Now had come the great test. Would Lindbergh shut off his motor and hope to come to a stop before the crash at the end of the runway? It was a decision that could not be pondered upon. It was a decision which must be made like a flash.

Lindbergh decided. Summoning to his aid a reserve of power—it must have been from his own mighty spirit—he threw on the last bit of impulse of which the roaring motor was capable, moved his controls—and with an effort which seemed that of his own will the heavy airplane raised itself slowly from the ground.

The silent crowd burst into a cheer that was almost a sob. Those watching were perspiring

and dry of throat as if it had been an effort of their own.

The Spirit of St. Louis rose and barely cleared the buildings and the wire. It still seemed as if the lion-hearted pilot at the controls was holding it up. He would not admit defeat.

Still near the ground the silver-gray monoplane was outlined clearly for an instant in the early morning light. And then it faded into the mist.

Lindbergh was off.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

WHILE THE WORLD WATCHED

LINDBERGH was off.

The great news flashed around the world. Lindbergh was alone but before his silver-gray monoplane had faded from the sight of the few thousand gathered at Roosevelt Field he was accompanied by the hopes and prayers of millions.

In a thousand cities people going to work that morning saw the news in newspaper extras. "Lindbergh Starts." Men and women, young and old, felt their throats tighten as the yelling newsboys and the flaring headlines announced the take-off.

Youth—off in the skies on as daring an adventure as man had ever embarked upon.

The unassuming young man with the shy grin, the boy who slipped away to the movies and to Coney Island, the theorist who had

pored over every detail of his plans in San Diego, the air-mail flier who liked to ride through blizzards, the dare-devil who did stunts at county fairs, the youth who tore around on a motor cycle with his cap on backwards, the child in a tree top who had dreamed of flying, the tight-lipped, grim, fighting man who had literally lifted his airplane from the soggy runway of Roosevelt Field—Charles Lindbergh was alone in the air on his way to Paris.

No man could think of it unmoved. Up there in the skies were one's own aspirations. The lone flier symbolized man's highest reach toward the conquest of his environment. With Lindbergh was flying the future of the race.

Lindbergh was out of sight, but in the imagination of all those thinking of him his flight was a thing as genuine as if they could see the sun glinting on his wing tips or hear the throb if his motor.

Would he make it? Where was he now? The everyday world, that 20th of May, had its mind off its work.

In America his flight was regarded with boundless pride. A native of the great American Middle West, the son of a congressman, trained on a score of American flying fields, a former air-mail pilot, a National Guard officer, he had traversed the entire United States before taking off and now, far out on his flight, in a unique sense he was truly representative of America.

In France, bowed for days in mourning for the loss of the gallant Nungesser and Coli, his start was acclaimed with joy. Nungesser and Coli had failed. It was fitting that a youth flying alone, with pure daring his chief equipment, should brave their fate. Paris, his goal, longed for his safe arrival with a fervor that increased as every hour passed.

The whole world joined France and America in praying for his success. Never had one man borne with him more universal hope than rose from the hearts of millions as he sped on through the sky.

The first report of his progress came from the group of airplanes which had escorted

him away from Roosevelt Field. With his greater speed he had outdistanced them near Port Jefferson, Long Island. They reported that he was flying fast and low, barely clearing the tree tops, but that his motor was hitting perfectly.

Soon after he was seen passing over Bryantsville, Connecticut, still flying very low but very fast.

Then hours passed with no word of him. Fog and rain were reported at many points along the New England coast which he was following on his way to Newfoundland. The hours without news emphasized what must be his loneliness. For hours he had been out of sight. Not only was he alone but not even one man had seen him.

Shortly after noon Halifax reported that an airplane which may have been Lindbergh's had been seen ten miles from Meteghan, Nova Scotia. This report was speedily supported by one from New Tusket, Nova Scotia, over which his airplane had passed, flying low and very fast.

For a time it had seemed unreal—this idea that Lindbergh was flying to Paris. It had seemed as if, when he had faded from sight of the watchers at Roosevelt Field into the low-lying mist, he had disappeared into some region of unreality—perhaps into that sky of dreams that had preoccupied the boy in the tree top.

But here he was over Nova Scotia, still flying low but "very fast." Obviously he was going somewhere. Straight on his route as a line drawn on the map and exactly on schedule. This was the man of action who had lifted his airplane from the soggy ground, putting into effect the plans so carefully laid by the theorist at San Diego.

The world's sympathy was still with him—more than ever with him. But now it was not quite so prayerful. This was not a Lost Cause for the success of which one could only yearn. It was an active, fighting, moving adventure, for which one could already begin to cheer as well as pray.

Two hours later Halifax reported him over

Milford. Still on schedule and still directly on his route.

Another hour and a half and he had passed over Mulgrave, Nova Scotia. Now he was flying high and those who saw the silver monoplane spoke of it as "going at a terrific speed."

An hour later he was over Cape Breton Island. He had been seen at Main Adieu. Appropriate place name from which to observe him.

Finally at 8:45 St. Johns, Newfoundland, saw him pass on his way to the open sea.

Now he was out over the North Atlantic. Exactly on his route he had been throughout his swift dash up the coast of North America. But now he was out over the ocean and darkness was closing about him.

In every corner of the civilized world mankind was absorbed in following the progress of his great flight. Typical of this extraordinary interest was the crowd of forty thousand in New York which had gathered to witness a heavyweight prize fight. Earlier in the week the sporting world had been much

occupied with this fight. It was a contest of considerable importance. Even now forty thousand people had assembled to witness it. But the buzz and chatter of comment from the ringside to the most distant seats was not centered on the science of boxing.

Wonder how he's making it? The crowd was one vast question mark.

The veteran announcer demanded attention.

"Let's stand a moment in silent prayer for Charlie Lindbergh," he suggested in a stentorian voice accustomed to announcing the florid names of prize fighters.

The "fight crowd," that assemblage noted above all others for its hardened lack of sympathy and sentiment, stood, uncovered and in silence. Only the deep breathing of forty thousand people deeply moved was audible during that moment.

They saw what millions of others were seeing that night. An infinitesimal mote darting across a limitless black sky high above a boundless black ocean. No man could be more alone. No man could dare more than he was daring.

At midnight, as separated from his fellow men as if he were on another planet, he must be somewhere out over the North Atlantic.

Four hours after Lindbergh had passed over St. Johns the liner, *Empress of Scotland,* wirelessed the report that he had been seen flying at latitude 49.24, longitude 43.72. True or not the world hailed the report with delight. He was still up and still safe.

On the other hand government weather reports showed the existence of a great belt of fog and rain and possibly sleet directly across the route he must take. Sleet was the most dangerous enemy of transatlantic flights.

Hours passed. Then the steamer *Hilbersun* reported sighting him 500 miles off the Irish coast. No longer off North America but now off Europe. Two-thirds of his voyage completed.

From now on the world was stirred with rumors. The very intensity with which every one longed for more definite word of his progress produced a myriad of reports. They were broadcast and repeated by radio, passed

about by word of mouth, and again broadcast.

Then at last there came word that was definite. He had passed the coast of Ireland. Queenstown reported that a commander of the County Kerry civic guards had sighted his silver-gray monoplane over Smerwich Harbor, north of Dingle.

The tautened nerves of a hundred million watchers relaxed. He was going to make it. It was too soon to rejoice. But now he was in the home stretch.

Most amazing to the thoughtful was his appearance at Smerwich, identically at the point on the coast of Ireland which would be touched by a navigator's pencil ruling a great circle line of his route from New York to Paris. He had been exactly on schedule and route the day before passing over Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. But now, after a night of flying through darkness, fog, over the trackless ocean, here he was, still true as a bee to his line.

In New York crowds gathered before every bulletin board. Newspapers were bought as soon as issued. Rumors increased. It was

said he had already passed the English Channel and then denied. One enterprising New York newspaper sold thousands of copies by the device of announcing in great headlines that he had already arrived in Paris. It created a brief commotion but people had been observing his course too closely to be really fooled. They knew he could not have reached that distance until later in the day.

Authentic reports were frequent now. Soon he was over Cork, then Plymouth, then over the Channel.

In mid-afternoon, New York time, he reached the coast of France. Success now was certain. The city from which he had started was one vast stir of delight. The same wave of joy was sweeping the country, and the world.

Lindbergh was making it.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE FLIGHT

DURING those last few days before leaving New York Lindbergh was often seen with a small kitten. While working on his airplane or lounging about the hangar or attempting to avoid interviewers this nondescript ball of fluff was generally on his shoulder, clinging with its tiny claws and rubbing against his ear.

He had always liked animals, especially dogs and horses. But he also liked kittens, especially this one. Those who noted the sudden attachment between the flier and the kitten began to speculate on his taking it with him on the flight. It weighed so little it would not count and the presence of this tiny ball of something warm and alive would surely go far to relieve his lonely vigil. Watching him

fondle the little animal, it was easy to feel this romance founded on fact.

In that grim, stern tension, just before the take-off, Friday morning, some one thought to ask Lindbergh if he were taking the kitten with him.

His lips twitched with a suspicion of his normal grin.

"Oh, no," he replied quickly, and then added, "It would be too cold up there. I'd be afraid of it's freezing. It's much better off here."

He could have kept it from being cold, easily enough, by allowing it to nestle inside the bosom of his heavy flying suit. There was little danger of serious cold inside the tight enclosed cockpit. What Lindbergh really meant was that he was unwilling for the kitten to undergo the risk of the flight.

He had no illusions about the voyage before he set out. No one knew better than he the dangers which confronted him. In his San Diego notebook were carefully catalogued all the many hazards. There were many and they were serious. As evidence of his attitude

just before the take-off one of those who talked to him reported him as saying:

"When I get into that cockpit its like getting into a death chamber.

"And if I get out of it in Paris it will be like a pardon from the governor."

It later developed that Lindbergh had not used these words in describing his feelings at that moment but it is equally clear that he appreciated very seriously the gauntlet he was to run. It was not a trip upon which he wished to take a fluffy little ball of a kitten.

No one could follow Lindbergh on that flight. No one could even be with him during that first desperate moment before he succeeded in lifting his airplane off the ground. The great leap was a lonely and desperate adventure which no other man can repeat and even Lindbergh himself can not experience again. The flight has once been made and no man can again face the loneliness he faced on that first plunge into space.

Probably he will never prove able even to

explain, so that other men can comprehend, all that he felt during those hours.

Within two hours of his arrival in Paris he tried to tell of his feat. A score of newspapermen, representing the intense interest of millions of people the world over, were listening to his account.

"We had received reports of favorable weather over the whole Atlantic," he explained, "but I really struck rain and sleet over a thousand miles of ocean.

"That wasn't so good.

"I was flying at times at an altitude of only ten feet over the ocean and at other times ten thousand feet.

"I never saw a ship in the daytime. I saw the lights of one at night. There was so much fog, you know.

"I was never sleepy and didn't resort to caffeine or other stimulants. I just drank water."

Such was his story. Barely a hundred words. At the moment the clipping bureau he had naïvely engaged to look for clippings

mentioning his flight estimated newspapers in America alone had carried 27,000 columns.

But what a story. Taking off with the expectation of favorable weather he instead encountered a thousand miles of rain and sleet in mid ocean.

"That wasn't so good," is his comment.

The next terse line tells what he did about it. He did not turn back. Neither did he plunge blindly and stubbornly forward. He fought the elements as resourcefully as he had planned and prepared for the flight. At times he swooped to the very surface of the water, seeking better flying conditions. Again he soared to ten thousand feet to get above the rain and sleet.

What a struggle. The storms of the North Atlantic. Storms a thousand miles wide. And pitted against them this midge of a man and a machine from the distant land. And the midge won.

Was he lonely? He says he never saw a ship. Was he sleepy? He says not. How did it feel to be alone in mid Atlantic, embarked

on a feat which had the attention of the entire world? Of what he felt he says nothing at all.

Then his eyes lighted with enthusiasm.

"I could have continued at least another 500 miles," he declared.

He was not boasting of his personal prowess. He was talking about the other part of "we"—his airplane. Even after this flight, after fighting rain and sleet, climbing and descending and detouring to seek better weather, he arrived with gasoline for another 500 miles in his tank. This was a triumph for his airplane and he was eager to call attention to it.

Some one said something about good luck. He grinned.

"Well, we hit Ireland within three miles of the point we had headed for," he admitted. "If we'd hit the coast within twenty-five miles —that would have been good navigation. To have hit it within three miles—well, that was luck."

Luck. Leaving San Diego and flying at night he had made St. Louis in a direct line

of mathematical accuracy. Again he had taken off and gone on to New York, another line as straight as a ruler could draw. And finally he had taken the air on the last great hop of 3,600 miles, two days and a night in the air, 33½ hours of steady flying, a third of it by night, more than half of it over a trackless ocean, a thousand miles of it through rain and sleet, and this time, also, he had proceeded on the exact line he had planned, the prow of his airplane always toward Paris as steadily as if he could see the Eiffel Tower from the time he left the runway at Roosevelt Field.

The first roar of acclaim with which the world greeted his success was a tribute to his daring. Not in recorded history was there a feat more startling than his. Then gradually it became clear that there was about his flight something only a trifle less admirable than courage. That was intelligence. The intelligence that had forseen every hazard and had taken measures against it. The intelligence which had selected the airplane and guided its design. The intelligence that had planned

every detail of the venture in advance. The intelligence which had equipped the expedition with exactly what was necessary and no more. And the intelligence which, when the venture was once under way, was capable of directing it straightforwardly through to its conclusion.

No man but must be pleased to hear the crowd pronounce him brave. But nothing could please Charles Lindbergh so much as to hear what he did hear innumerable times—the veteran and experienced aviators of the world pronounce him a great flier.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

HIS MOTHER

WHEN Lindbergh was flying to Paris and later, when he arrived and was acclaimed a world hero, an unassuming woman possessed of as great mastery of herself as Lindbergh had of himself, kept busy at her work. She was a school-teacher, instructing classes in chemistry at Cass Technical High School, Detroit, Michigan.

The woman was Mrs. Evangeline Lodge Lindbergh, mother of the flier. Next to the attention centered upon Lindbergh, this modest and retiring woman was, for the moment, drawing more notice than any other person in the world. Hardly was the flight mentioned without some conjecture about the reactions of the aviator's mother. It would have been easy for her to leap into public prominence, to profit

largely from the glory her son was winning. She might have been a dramatic, hysterical person who would have been at the very least a mental hazard for Lindbergh in his undertaking.

But she was not the sort of woman to indulge in heroics or to profit by that which some one else, even though it were her son, might be doing. During the thirty-four hours Lindbergh was in the air, no one knows just what went on within her, but the public does know that outwardly she was not in the least changed.

Before the flight began Mrs. Lindbergh came to New York and spent a few days with her son. He was much in the public notice at the time, a position which was forced upon him and was not of his seeking. It was just at the beginning of the period when the popular imagination was seizing him as its newest hero. But Mrs. Lindbergh was seen but little. She was with him most of the time during that visit, was pictured with him, and granted a few interviews. But in everything she did, she

held forward her son and not herself as the center of that which was transpiring.

Then, one evening, Mrs. Lindbergh, much as she desired to remain and see her boy fly away, bade him a quiet farewell and returned to her school room in Detroit. In the next few days she was almost lost to sight.

Then, on the morning of May 20, she was told by a correspondent of the United Press that Lindbergh was on his way. Her answer contained nothing of the theatrical. She said she wished him success and she knew that her wish would be granted. Just as Lindbergh had complete confidence in himself, she had complete confidence in him.

An hour later Mrs. Lindbergh was at the high school. Pupils wanted to cluster around her and talk with her of her son's adventure. But she would have none of it. She realized that trying hours were ahead. She went to the principal of the school and requested that no news be given her of the progress of the flight during school hours and that no mention of it be made. The request was granted.

So, through that day, while the rest of the world was watching eagerly for each meager report that Lindbergh had been sighted, and while the crescendo of excitement was steadily moving upward and upward, Mrs. Lindbergh, to whom the flight meant more than to any one else, continued to instruct her students in the habits of atoms and the intricacies of chemical reactions. Those who attended her classes that day say that they could not notice any difference in her demeanor from what it had been on scores of other days.

When school was out she made her way quietly to the little home she occupied with her brother in Detroit and secluded herself within. At 10 P.M. the lights were out and word was sent to inquirers that she had retired. Whether she slept or not has never been revealed. Most of the world suspects that during that night, while Lindbergh was plowing his way through sleet and darkness out over the trackless Atlantic, his mother was alone in her room, her spirit flying with him.

By midday Saturday the success of the flight

seemed more certain. Crowds began gathering around her home. Police were sent to stand guard. Mrs. Lindbergh, late in the day, came out and met newspapermen, but she did not betray for a moment anything beyond natural motherly interest in the undertaking of an only son.

When towards evening the word was sent to her that her boy had come to rest at Le Bourget and that the world was rushing to lay its homage at his feet, her joy was unbounded, but never for a moment did she lose her poise.

From the time that Lindbergh was a child out in Minnesota her theory and her practice had been to permit him to follow his own bent. She had helped and guided him, but he had selected the path. Now, when that path was leading to dizzy summits, she left all the glory for him.

Invitations to be entertained and to be fêted came to her in profusion. There were messages from royalty, from the President of the United States, from rulers, and from statesmen. But each of these she received with the same atti-

tude—that they belonged to her son and not to her.

Casually looking upon what the public could see of this woman it would almost appear that her interest was detached, so Spartan was her attitude. But those closer to her knew that she was heart and soul hoping for her boy's success and that, perhaps, she knew, more than any one else, just what his chances were.

There was ample evidence of the attachment between the two and of the interest each had in the other, if such evidence were needed.

"I'd go with him but there is only one seat in the plane," Mrs. Lindbergh said during her visit to New York.

"Somebody tell mother," was the first request that Lindbergh made that tumultuous night when the crowds at Le Bourget were all but smothering him.

CHAPTER TWENTY

FRANCE

AN ever mounting wave of enthusiasm rose in France. Our diplomatic fears that France might resent a successful American flight so soon after the loss of Nungesser and Coli were proved unfounded. Hearts warmer than that beat in French breasts. No people set a higher value on individual heroism.

A boy was flying alone toward France on the most daring flight ever attempted by man. So gallant a venture could but be accepted as a tribute to Nungesser and Coli. And as such France accepted it. Prayers as fervent as those for the French fliers were offered for the success of the young Lindbergh who was scaling heights which had proved unassailable to the experience and determination of the veteran French war heroes.

Crowds gathered around bulletin boards in the streets of Paris, wildly cheering every comforting report of Lindbergh's progress. The French appreciated more clearly than any others the hazard of that great flight. Their own flesh and blood had dared that hazard and had met with glorious defeat.

But this boy, whose photographed sunny smile had already won their hearts—how they hoped he would not fail.

Aviation experts were skeptical. Scientifically planned expeditions had failed when led by the most skilled pilots. How could this untried youth, in a small, single-motored airplane, without navigating training, with slight equipment, expect to succeed?

Unfounded legends of the poverty of his equipment and preparation were current. It was said he had only a small magnetic compass to guide his course and a leaf torn from a school boy geography for a map. The American nicknames "Flying Fool" and "Lucky" were on every one's lips. Paris saw the flight as a blazing, soul-stirring adventure of mad

youth. He could not succeed. But what a glorious attempt.

Still, there came those amazingly regular reports of his progress. He had passed Newfoundland. He was seen at sea. He was 500 miles from Ireland. And then he had passed the Irish coast. He was over Europe.

Enthusiasm like that which had hailed the false reports of Nungesser's mythical flight down the coast of North America flamed in the streets of Paris. The mad youth was succeeding.

Ten thousand people were gathered at Le Bourget by early evening. It was a restless, still incredulous, excitable crowd. It did not seem possible that he was to arrive here out on this great flat field, shadowed by the rays of the setting sun. And yet they had come to see his arrival. Lindbergh. Lindbergh. Lindbergh. The magic name was repeated in ten thousand chattering, excited knots of conversation.

The authorities had taken extraordinary measures to prepare the way for Lindbergh's

reception. It was feared that in the excitement some confusion might result. It was known that very likely he would be fatigued and it was planned to protect him against undue commotion.

A regiment of infantry was there, the soldiers with bayoneted rifles. Some 700 Paris police also were present to assist the field's regular guards in keeping order. Moreover the bulk of the crowd was restrained behind a huge iron fence with spikes on its top.

A pompous reception committee was ready to greet the flyer. Every move of the reception had been planned: how he was to be saluted, the direction in which he was to be led off the field, where he should be taken to rest.

Darkness settled over the field. The wind became chill. The lights on the field caused the sky to seem a dense mantle of impenetrable blackness.

A strange pall of pessimism settled down with the darkness and chill. An obscure sense of tragedy moved the assemblage. The excited chatter of conversation died away.

They had been foolish again to be deceived. They had thought Nungesser had reached New York. But then they had been fooled. It was the same again. Those reports of Lindbergh's progress could not have been true. Staring into that cold dark sky, who could believe the mad youth could penetrate it to find his way to this lighted field? People coughed, shifted their feet, whispered, shrugged their shoulders, shook their heads—but waited.

Then came the undeniable announcement that Lindbergh had passed Cherbourg. The field echoed with cheers. He was over France. That was a fact that possessed reality. It could be visualized.

Immediately the crowd was augmented. More thousands streamed out from Paris until over 50,000 were gathered about the field in one great dark mass of humanity.

Lindbergh was coming.

The time it would take to fly from Cherbourg to Paris was easily computed. He should make it in an hour and a half. He

was due around ten o'clock. Any moment he would arrive.

The crowd pressed against the iron fence. The little soldiers with the long bayoneted rifles fidgeted uneasily. The police, their nerves roughened by the suspense they too felt, pushed the crowd back roughly. The strain of waiting seemed unendurable.

Then there was a drone in the sky. The huge flood lights intended to light Lindbergh's descent threw their glow against the black sky. A great shout went up.

But the drone passed on and died away before the shouting ceased. Silence settled down again. The lights were switched off.

It was well past ten now. He was overdue.

Suddenly there came that mysterious drone again. This time it stopped quickly.

A pale, ghost-like monoplane emerged like a wraith from the darkness overhead. It was coming down. The great flood lights flashed on and the ghost-plane was sharply outlined.

Gleaming like silver in the glare it swooped gracefully earthward.

It was Lindbergh. He had arrived. Man's greatest feat in flying was a success.

Now the plane had touched the earth, alighting as daintily as a bird. Paris and New York. France and America, had been joined by air.

The bright monoplane rolled more slowly across the field as the momentum of its great flight reluctantly died away. The beams from a hundred lights glittered on its whirling propellor and along its silvery wings and sides. It looked like some strange visitor from another world.

A tremendous roar went up from 50,000 throats, aching with the sudden relief from tense suspense. And then the sight of that silvery monoplane, suddenly become the symbol of victory in one of man's highest aspirations, overwhelmed 50,000 people at the same instant.

It was no mere curiosity. Their emotions were a strange mingling, akin to worship. This shining airplane and its young pilot formed a symbol of victory, a victory spiritual as well as physical. They must approach it.

Gaze upon it more closely. Touch it. Feel it. See Lindbergh in the moment of his success. Feel that they were near, were a part of so great an event.

With the brusque movement of a suddenly awakened giant, fifty thousand people uprooted the iron fence from its concrete moorings, brushed it aside as if it were a pale of straw, as quickly brushed aside the hundreds of police and the regiment of infantry, and swept irresistibly across the field.

The reception was wrested from the hands of those who had so carefully planned it. The people of France were coming to welcome Charles Lindbergh.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

LE BOURGET

LINDBERGH had picked up the French coast before the darkness of the second night of his flight closed around him. It seemed certain now that his great venture was to be a success. The months of dreams and plans and preparations were culminating in victory.

The uncertainties of the take-off from Roosevelt Field, the dangers of the heavily weighted flying during the first few hours of his voyage, the fogs of Newfoundland, the storms of the North Atlantic, the problem of keeping his course over the unmarked sea, all these difficulties had been surmounted.

He was over France and victory was just ahead.

But this last hour was the hardest. No longer was he keyed up by the hazard of trans-

atlantic flying. Fatigue weighed heavily on him. This was Saturday night. He had had but two hours sleep since early Thursday morning.

Then in the distance there appeared above the horizon the faintly pin-pricked lights of the Eiffel Tower.

He was in sight of Paris. The tireless drone of motor and beat of propellor were carrying him onward two miles a minute. He had always been confident he would make it. But now that success was in sight it seemed hardly true.

Now he was over Paris and for the first time he felt a moment of uncertainty. He misjudged the direction of Le Bourget and circled until he made sure what he had at first doubted: that the strangely lighted expanse was the field.

He dove downward and the wheels of The Spirit of St. Louis touched the earth. His great flight was ended.

For a second he slumped forward, even his apparent tirelessness subject for an instant to the pressure of fatigue. But the next second

he was caught up in that unparalleled maelstrom of excitement boiling upon Le Bourget Field.

A scattering of field officials, French aviators, gendarmes, and newspaper reporters were running alongside the airplane before it had come to a full stop, gesticulating madly and attempting to peer through the tiny window of the cockpit.

All wished to shake hands at once. To pound him on the back, to embrace him. Questions, congratulations, disconnected exclamations, those in English as incomprehensible as those in French, poured upon him.

Then came the deluge. The crowd, fifty thousand faces forming a pale, tumultuous sea in the glare of the lights, their waving arms and bobbing heads a fantastic silhouette against the more distant lights behind them, was sweeping forward, the soldiers and police disappearing and merging with the mob like froth in a torrent.

No distant recollection of that moment remains with any of those present. It was like

some tremendous natural upheaval, furious and uncontrollable. Fifty thousand people were moved to a frenzy of triumph.

In that mad rush hundreds were thrown down and trampled. Children were separated from mothers. A host of men and boys who had ridden bicycles out to Le Bourget had their machines trodden into wreckage. Later several score were treated for minor injuries but happily no one was seriously hurt.

The mass of the crowd closed around the airplane. Thousands struggled to touch it. Many attempted to tear bits of the fabric to carry off for good luck. But most of them were moved purely by the wild desire to be present at such a moment.

The ponderous reception plans were submerged. The officials who had planned to welcome Lindbergh with speeches were themselves but individuals in the crowd, of no more consequence than any other of the fifty thousand.

To Lindbergh it was the great moment of his flight, of his life. He had expected, naturally,

to be welcomed if he succeeded. But this was not a mere welcome. This tremendous and spontaneous outburst of fifty thousand people was a revelation of the emotion experienced by hundreds of millions. These were present and could give vent to their feelings. The others, not so fortunate, yet were moved to a less obvious degree by the same sense of triumph.

The hearts and hopes of mankind had never accompanied a venture of man as they had this boy's lone flight. It was not until he had safely arrived that this unprecedented interest took shape in its full emotional sincerity.

This was no moment for official welcomes. Later there might be time for speeches and medals. But in this moment Lindbergh belonged to the people. They had followed his flight with such sympathy that it had amounted to their identifying themselves with him. Now he had arrived. His victory was their victory.

Lindbergh, with that clairvoyance and understanding he was to exhibit so many times in the next few days, realized this. It was not his triumph alone. In him mankind had

triumphed. For the moment he was a demi-god, the personification of human achievement.

Lindbergh had conceived this flight. He had planned its every detail. His training, foresight, confidence, and skill had made it possible. His courage and intelligence had brought it to a successful conclusion. But now that it was completed it was not his alone. It was the world's. He was not only a hero. Fifty thousand people and behind them hundreds of millions of others had in that moment made him their representative. He understood, and in his bearing throughout the succeeding two weeks, while he was the object of such personal and intimate adulation as no man had ever before received, this understanding was evident in his every word and act.

But the uncontrollable fervor of the crowd, as those in the front rank were thrust forward by the thousands behind, made the situation a serious one even for a hero. Lindbergh feared for his airplane and those nearest feared for him. The Spirit of St. Louis was lifted and shaken about as the crowd surged this way

and that. A hundred hands were grasping at Lindbergh, the chief impulse being to lift him upon shoulders to bear about in triumph.

In this crisis it was not the officials or the police who rescued him from possible injury. French aviators, men of his own kind who comprehended better than any one else could the full extent of the victory he had won and who felt for him the happy sympathy of comrades, took him in charge. He was wrapped in a French soldier's cloak and smuggled away into the crowd while others hoisted to their shoulders another tall blond young man, paying no heed to the innocent stranger's vain remonstrances.

Secreted in a hangar Lindbergh was permitted a few moments of relaxation while the crowd stormed about the administration building, cheering for hours, and demanding a sight of Lindbergh. At length Ambassador Herrick appeared on the balcony, waving a flier's helmet, and the crowd redoubled its demonstration.

With all reception plans in the discard Lind-

bergh's welcome took a natural course. The French officers who had taken him in charge put him in an automobile and carried him off to Paris. Half the automobiles of Paris were struggling to reach Le Bourget, bringing thousands who wished to join in the mass demonstration. Thousands of others were just leaving Le Bourget to go to Paris. In this impervious traffic jam the motor car bearing Lindbergh, the man whom a hundred thousand were seeking, moved on unnoticed. Finally reaching Paris Lindbergh was taken to the American embassy.

While excitement continued unabated at Le Bourget and up and down the streets of Paris the cause of it all was taking a bath. He professed not to be particularly sleepy, and he ate with relish a light supper of broth, toast, and a poached egg.

Messages of congratulation, including one from the President of the United States, were pouring in. He was the guest of the American Ambassador (one of the men to whom, before he had left the United States, he had

thoughtfully secured a letter of introduction, a letter which somehow there never was an opportunity to present). Outside, the city of Paris was blazing with a carnival spirit of welcome. But he sat on the edge of a bed, conversing with Ambassador Herrick with that same friendly diffident smile which had greeted New York when he emerged from his airplane after the flight from St. Louis.

Lindbergh was unchanged. He was the same man who had planned this flight in San Diego. And, as was the case in New York, his first thought was still of his airplane. He was afraid it had been injured by the crowd at Le Bourget. It was with difficulty that Ambassador Herrick persuaded him to go to bed. The flier wanted to go back to Le Bourget to inspect The Spirit of St. Louis.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE NEWS

LINDBERGH'S flight aroused more interest the world around than had any event since the World War, according to the demands of newspaper readers. Not a newspaper but reported a circulation of thousands above normal during the days he was en route.

Cables were jammed. Press associations devoted literally the entire capacity of their wires to thousands of words of description of everything connected with the flight. The public could not hear enough of a story they liked so well to read. In the judgment of most editors the flight was the biggest single news story since the Armistice.

Lindbergh's venture had gripped public imagination. Only a few people had seen the start. But a handful had observed his passing airplane while he was en route. A compara-

tively few thousands out of the world's millions had witnessed his arrival at Le Bourget. But to hundreds of millions his flight was an experience almost as real as it was to those who saw some portion of it. These saw his flight through the newspapers, visualizing what they read as edition after edition came out reporting his progress.

No account of his flight would be complete without attempting to present it as it appeared to the public at the time through contemporary press descriptions. There follow the highlights of his flight as they appeared to those reading newspapers served by the United Press. Herewith are, first, the story of his start from Roosevelt Field, then selected bulletins sketching his progress, and finally the account of his arrival at Le Bourget:

ROOSEVELT FIELD, New York, May 20.—Charles A. Lindbergh, alone and without ceremony, sailed off into the gray of this foggy morning, in his Ryan monoplane, shouting to his friends that to-morrow he will be in Paris.

Last seen this daring youngster of twenty-five years, was flying so low over Long Island Sound near Port Jefferson, New York, that had he been over land he would hardly have cleared the tree tops.

His departure was, much as his arrival out of the west had been, almost unheralded, daring and dramatic in its very lack of pomp and circumstance.

Last night Lindbergh said he didn't think he would go. But about 11 P.M. favorable weather reports came to him. There was a stir in his quarters and he went to bed.

A few hours later he appeared at the flying field where had gathered perhaps a thousand people, mostly men, willing to lose a night's sleep to see this lone wolf of the flying pack, head away into the east for Paris.

His plane was wheeled from the hangar and towed from Curtiss Field to the head of the runway which Commander Richard Byrd had built at Roosevelt Field and in the spirit of the aviator's fraternity, had invited Lindbergh to use.

Mechanics went over it for the last time and fueled the tanks. Lindbergh sought seclusion from a shower of rain in a nearby automobile. He wasn't the smiling youth of yesterday, happy with a roller coaster at Coney Island or with a toy giraffe for his hat. He was grim, nervous, and his friends kept the crowd away from him. This was solemn business.

The mechanics pronounced the machine ready. Lindbergh stepped to it, got into the cockpit, looked over his cargo and came out to walk once more around the plane, trying this and that, and finding all was well.

Some one spoke of the kitten which had been given him as a mascot.

"No, don't put it in, it will be too cold," he said. "The kitten might die."

He had thus expelled his only possible living companion for the 30 to 40 hours he hoped to be flying alone in a terrible monotony.

"I'll be in Paris to-morrow," he assured B. F. Mahoney, the twenty-six-year-old president of the Ryan Airlines of San Diego, Calif.

Grover Whalen, Commander Richard E. Byrd and Anthony Fokker in turn wished him luck.

"I'll see you in Paris," said Byrd.

Chief of Police A. W. Skidmore of Garden City, who had become a close friend of the daring westerner, came up.

"Well, kid, you're about to go," he said. "If you come back you'll get a good reception right here."

Lindbergh climbed back into the machine, speeded his motor and looked out at the crowd which was standing silent and speaking only in whispers, all eyes intent upon this one, audacious youth who sat there ready to challenge, alone and unaided, the Atlantic.

He turned to his controls. He glanced again at his instruments. All was well. He speeded his engine. The heavy plane began slowly to move. The crowd cheered. Lindbergh could be seen, all nervous intensity, and not a sign of the smile which has become so familiar.

Gradually the machine picked up speed, and

olled away. Nearly half a mile down the unway it bumped and bounced.

"He can't make it," men gasped, "He is going too slow. For God's sake, why don't he speed up."

Lindbergh was doing the audacious thing once more. He was moving east on the runway. If he failed to rise, he would crash into wires and trees and houses. He could as well have gone the other way and had a clear field ahead of him, yet, it seems one of the perversities of this man to challenge fate.

But Lindbergh knew what he was doing. The machine bumped heavily twice more, digging great ruts in the water soaked and slimy mud of the runway.

Then it slowly began to rise. The crowd cheered as daylight could be seen beneath the plane. A thousand people began running as if they might catch up with him, down the field.

By feet, the plane rose, cleared the wires, tree tops and houses.

"God be with him," murmured Commander Byrd.

Lindbergh's plane grew smaller and smaller and then suddenly its silver-gray wings merged into the morning clouds and it was gone from view much as a light is turned out.

Charles Lindbergh, called "Slim" by his friends in the west and "Lucky" by his friends in the east—was away on his supreme adventure alone.

For the next 30 to 40 hours he hoped to sit there, unable to rise, his hands on the controls, his eyes on his instruments, unable to see ahead except through uncertain periscopes, and with only the monotony of the restless Atlantic beneath him and the hum of his motor to hear.

A few moments later five planes, including Commander Byrd, Fokker, were off as an escort of honor.

The first to return told of Lindbergh passing Port Jefferson.

A little later Arthur Caperton, a Curtiss flier, came back.

"He was going fast," he reported, "and

every cylinder of his engine was hitting perfectly. He must have been making better than 100 miles an hour."

His course took him up Long Island Sound, toward the end of which the morning fogs were giving way to a bright, clear day. Then he planned to head for Cape Race, Newfoundland, flying a straight course if weather favored it, but otherwise going out to sea or inland, high or low, wherever conditions were best.

From Cape Race Lindbergh planned to describe a great circle, leading in a curve into the north, where it might be cold and dreary and then down over Ireland, England and to Paris.

If luck is with him, Paris will welcome the first man ever to fly from New York to France, sometime late to-morrow.

"I'll probably go to sleep," was Lindbergh's promise on what he would do when he gets there.

BROCKTON, MASS., May 20.—A monoplane, believed to have been that of Captain Charles Lindbergh, passed over Bryantsville, eight

miles East of here, at 9:40 A.M. to-day, according to a report from that village.

The plane was flying so low that townsfolk reported they could see the letters and figures "NX 211"—Lindbergh's mark—on the machine.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, May 20.—A report from Meteghan, Digby, N. S., to-day said an airplane which might have been Capt. Charles Lindbergh's, passed ten miles from that place at 12:25 P.M., Eastern Daylight Saving time.

NEW TUSKETT, N. S., May 20.—Charles Lindbergh, the lone airman of the West, passed here at 12:45 P.M., Atlantic standard time, today. He was flying low and his machine was making fast time.

HALIFAX, N. S., May 20.—A telephone message from Milford, 40 miles north of here, said that at 2:50 P.M., Atlantic daylight time, the gray plane assumed to be that of Charles Lindbergh, flew over that city.

MULGRAVE, N. S., May 20.—Capt. Charles Lindbergh passed over here at 4 P.M., Atlantic Daylight Time. He was flying high and the plane seemed to be going at terrific speed.

HALIFAX, N.S., May 20.—Captain Charles Lindbergh was sighted at 5 P.M., Atlantic Daylight time, to-day, over Cape Breton Island, a dispatch from Main Adieu said. The lone American flyer was headed for Newfoundland, whence he would turn to the open sea.

ST. JOHNS, NEWFOUNDLAND, May 20.—Captain Charles Lindbergh, American aviator on a transatlantic flight to Paris, passed over St. Johns, on his way out to the open sea, at 8:45 P.M., Atlantic Daylight time. His plane was seen distinctly by those who had been watching for it.

NEW YORK, May 21.—The S. S. *Empress of Scotland* sighted a plane believed to have been that of Capt. Charles Lindbergh at Latitude 49.24, Longitude 43.72 at 2:10 A.M., today, Atlantic Summer Time (12:40 A.M.,

Eastern Daylight time), according to reports reaching Western Union this morning.

ST. JOHNS, May 21.—Captain Charles Lindbergh, en route from New York to Paris, was sighted at 12:10 Greenwich mean time, the steamer Hilbersun reported by wireless to-day. Lindbergh was 500 miles off the Irish coast at that time, the steamer said.

QUEENSTOWN, IRELAND, May 21.—An airplane believed by the commander of the County Kerry civic guards to have been that of Charles Lindbergh, was sighted over Smerwick Harbor, north of Dingle, at 5:20 P.M., Irish summer time, or 12:20 P.M., Eastern Daylight to-day.

TRALEE, IRELAND, May 21.—An airplane passed over Smerwick Harbor this afternoon at an altitude of 1,000 feet, too high to be identified by markings. The motor seemed to be working well, and flying conditions were good.

LONDON, May 21.—An Exchange Telegraph dispatch reported to-day that Lind-

bergh's machine was reported to have passed over Goleen, in the southwest corner of County Cork at 12:50 P.M., Eastern Daylight time.

PLYMOUTH, ENGLAND, May 21.—A gray monoplane believed to be that of Charles Lindbergh, flying at great height, passed over Start Point and headed across the channel toward France to-day at 3 P.M., Eastern Daylight time.

CHERBOURG, FRANCE, May 21.—At 3:20 P.M., Eastern daylight time, a monoplane believed to have been that of Charles Lindbergh, flew over here at a great height in the direction of Paris.

LE BOURGET, FRANCE, May 21.—An American eagle descended on tireless wings out of an inky sky here to-night and man's most defiant achievement in the perilous conquest of the air was completed.

Captain Charles Lindbergh landed on the Air Field at 10:21 P.M., completing a non-stop flight from New York to Paris in a single-motored Ryan Monoplane in 33½ hours.

The eagle had won against overwhelming odds and the golden Cock of France greeted him with a pæan crow of triumph so spontaneous and sincere as to warm French and American hearts as they have not been warmed in the nine years since Poilu and Doughboy fought side by side.

Lindbergh, the lucky dare-devil of the air, who left New York in his one-man plane at 7:51 A.M., Friday as nonchalantly as though he were going for a walk, accomplished what the world's greatest aviation experts said no man could do single-handed.

He sat alone and unafraid in the tiny cabin of the monoplane for the space of two full days and a night, relaxing never for a second his unblinking vigilance, and piloted his ship as true as a homing pigeon over the 3,600 miles of the "Great Circle" that comprise a direct air line from New York to Paris.

And France, still mourning for its gallant war Captains, Nungesser and Coli, who failed where Lindbergh succeeded, went almost insane in its heart-felt tribute to the courage, in-

domitable will-power and skill of the boyish young American.

Fully 50,000 men and women, with children scattered here and there despite the late hour, surged out on the field and acted like madmen in their eagerness to salute Lindbergh, to see him, touch his flying coat, or even lay a hand on the wing of his plane.

An hour later in Paris, scenes of joyful demonstration occurred which excelled even those that took place when Nungesser and Coli were falsely reported to have reached America.

The emotional tribute to bravery, however, reached its height when Myron T. Herrick, American Ambassador to France, appeared on a balcony of the Adminstration Building of the Air Field here, shortly after Lindbergh's arrival, waving the flier's helmet.

The crowd went wild, Herrick's lips moved, but he could not be heard above the terrific din, with one long note sounding clearly above all the shouts:

"Vive l'Amérique. Vive l'Amérique!"

The scene when the aviator landed here was unforgetable. For nearly 24 hours, when he had left the coast of Newfoundland at sunset last night, little definite was known of his progress. During the late afternoon, reports began trickling in that he had crosed the ocean, was over Ireland, over England, and approaching France.

People were incredulous, but several thousand came out to the field, hoping against hope as time wore on and the reports became more and more definite. The crowd grew by additional thousands every 15 minutes. Few in the vast assembly could believe that what the brave and experienced Nungesser and Coli could not do in their larger, carefully equipped plane, could be accomplished by the American.

While the crowd still excitedly discussed The United Press dispatch announcing Lindbergh's passage over Cherbourg, still half inclined to doubt, the steady drum of a motor was heard overhead.

Fifty thousand people were suddenly smitten into silence. They stood in the blaze of

light from flares and batteries of flood lights that made the field almost as light as day and stared aloft.

The drumming of the motor sounded more clearly. A swelling murmur started from the crowd. Suddenly, there was a shrill cry that grew to a great clamor.

Out of the impenetrable blackness overhead a light-colored plane spun into view.

The beams of light picked it out now, and its silver-gray glistened.

It came on steadily, showing no lights and gliding down slowly. When it was low enough so that the clamor from below probably would have reached the ears of the pilot, if they had not been deafened by more than 33 hours of listening to the rush of the wind and the beat of his motor, the plane began to circle.

The thought of an eagle settling down over its nest came into more than one mind. Calmly, coolly, as an aviator might after a short practice flight, Lucky Lindbergh deliberately circled the field three times, seeking his bearings and studying the ground for the landing.

Finally he banked down for the long landing glide. Then a thing occurred that stirred French aviation men present to an emotion almost akin to love for the brave young man.

Perhaps the crowd did not realize the thing he was doing, but the experienced aviation men saw the plane was headed straight towards the crowd surging out across the field to meet it. For a moment it looked like disaster and a sacrifice of lives.

Yet, after his terrible transatlantic feat, Lindbergh was as acutely awake, as quick in an emergency as ever an aviator was. He restarted his engine, which he had throttled down for the landing, set the propeller revolving at full speed, made a quick turn and came down to a gentle perfect landing away from the crowd.

Thousands of yelling men and women, with even policemen and soldiers joining the rush in their mad excitement, ran across the field to where the plane rested. Other thousands who had been held in check by an iron fence,

with troops in front of it, tore the fence from its moorings and joined them.

They converged on the grounded plane, in the cabin of which sat a silent drooping figure.

As the first of the crowd reached the spot, they began swarming on the plane, climbing over the sides to reach its pilot.

Hundreds of hands grasped for the wings.

Many minor injuries were sustained by persons in the crush, but no serious ones were reported. Hundreds of bicyclists went out on the field when the crowd surged forward and many were thrown to the ground and their wheels smashed. Women were trampled and even the gendarmes who tried to stem the rush were knocked over and walked on.

Herrick and other Americans comprising an official reception committee fought their way through to the plane, accompanied by newspapermen. The latter scrambled over the wings, shouting, "How are you?"

It seemed an inadequate greeting for such an event, yet it was typically American in its

avoidance of emotionalism and Lindbergh's answer was as typically American.

"Oh, all right."

Then the realization that his task was accomplished seemed to come home to the pilot and he slumped, half-fainting in his seat.

Something he had forgotten aroused him, though, and after a while he straightened up to ask:

"Somebody cable Mother."

Presently, Lindbergh began to recover more fully from the effects of the strain he had been under and grinned a little, making the historic remark that every American feels called upon to make on arriving at the French capital.

"So this is Paris."

"I did it," he added, almost in the same breath.

The happy, shouting crowd, its enthusiasm breaking all bounds, tried to raise the heavy plane on its shoulders and half-dragged half-carried it towards the hangars and the lights.

French military aviators rescued Lindbergh from the plane and assisted him towards the

Administration Building, then, while troops formed a lane towards the entrance of the building as a ruse, they maneuvered him into a hangar hear by.

There French doctors, despite Lindbergh's vehement objections—the bashful young man hates to have a fuss made over him—began rubbing his legs and arms and giving treatment to revive him. They almost had to force bits of chocolate into his mouth in their efforts to give him nourishment.

The activity of the volatile French medicos stirred Lindbergh to further protests but he was too tired to make active resistance and finally he subsided, muttering:

"But I tell you, I'm all right."

Finally, with the crowd still surging outside the Administration Building cheering Lindbergh, America, Herrick, France, Nungesser and Coli, and anything else it could think of to cheer about in its wild enthusiasm, Lindbergh was taken from the hangar, put in a closed automobile and started across a darkened part of the field in the opposite direction to Paris.

The crowd did not know he had gone and remained where it was. Word was passed on Lindbergh's first request, that somebody cable his mother, and the crowd cheered some more.

Every time a figure appeared at a window that might be Lindbergh, the cheering broke out afresh. When Herrick came out, waved the helmet and tried to make a speech, the noise became deafening.

Nearly half an hour later, the mob stormed the concrete hangar where the monoplane had been taken for safety. It was guarded by troops with bayonets, however. On examination it was found that the only damage done to the plane by the handling of the crowds before troops rescued it, was a broken tail skid.

The American Military Attaché arranged for the plane to remain untouched until tomorrow, when Lindbergh himself probably will come out to examine it and measure how much gasoline was left.

One of the chief topics of the crowd was Lindbergh's luck. His nickname of Lucky Lindbergh was the most-heard expression in

Paris. To-night military aviators came in droves to the plane just to touch the wings and shout excitedly:

"Now I'll surely have luck."

The wonder at the achievement of the twenty-five-years-old air mail pilot grew as the evening advanced.

It was agreed that Lindbergh, in addition to his supposed "Luck," was backed by extreme daring, uncanny piloting and navigating skill, and apparently a sixth sense of direction comparable to the instincts of a carrier pigeon.

French fliers were unstinted in their admiration and said it was doubtful if there were five aviators in the world who could have accomplished the crossing single-handed.

They characterized his feat as one of the most amazing in the history of aviation. Not only did this astounding young man make the flight where all others had failed, but he followed the line of flight he marked out for himself with almost unbelievable accuracy.

Without intricate calculations, he turned the

nose of his plane towards Paris and followed it unerringly. Neither the varying winds that tended to alter his course this way and that or the slow natural drift of the plane swung him from his course.

Although he had taken only two hours' sleep on the night before his start, Lindbergh never wavered on the long grind. He was able to resist the fatal tendency of the humming motors, hour after hour, to lull him to sleep.

In his brief remarks to admirers on landing here, Lindbergh spoke no word that would give an adequate idea of the intense drama of the lonely and undaunted young figure in the tiny plane, pitifully small over the wide expanse of ocean, as it winged its way steadily on.

He left it to the imagination to picture. One of his acts in starting, however, gave the key to the entire performance.

When he left Roosevelt Field, Long Island, it was noted that he started to the East. Experienced airmen warned him gravely to take off from the runway towards the West and turn in the air as the Eastward run meant a

perilous rise over nearby building and telegraph wires.

But, typical of the devil-may-care spirit of the young adventurer, he apparently had resolved to set his face towards Paris and keep it in that direction until he arrived. And as far as is known from the time he started until his plane headed over the field here from the West, his face never was away from Paris.

Word of these things had spread among the crowd and served to feed the enthusiasm. It was long after midnight when they began to disperse, cheering to the last. When some one, at one point, shouted, "Don't forget Nungesser," the crowd cheered fervently, then, as though feeling that their beloved "Flying Fool" (as they are calling him even in France) might appear to be neglected, they began to cheer Lindbergh all over again.

When finally the crowd began to disperse, the thousands of motor cars blocked all traffic for miles around. In Paris, the wildest enthusiasm prevailed along the boulevards, crowds surging everywhere, shouting, staging

impromptu demonstrations and mobbing news vendors with extra editions of the papers.

Motor cars making their way through the tangled traffic were bedecked with the French and American colors, and the crowds cheered them as they passed. It was a miniature of Armistice Night.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

TRIUMPH

DURING the two weeks following his arrival at Le Bourget, Charles Lindbergh was honored by foreign nations as no private citizen has ever been. He was not an emperor, or a king, or a general, or an admiral, or even a war hero. He was merely a young man with a friendly grin who as honors were heaped upon him won a greater victory than his transatlantic flight in that he was as unassuming and unaffected at the conclusion of these two weeks as he had been before he left San Diego.

When he awoke from his first sleep after reaching Paris he was confronted by a task more serious than flying through a mid-ocean sleet storm. This was the storm of his amazing popularity. He was deluged with messages of congratulations from the heads of

nations. Thousands of admirers gathered about his every step. Everything he said was eagerly listened to. Everything he did was watched. His every move was in the glare of a spotlight. He was subject not only to the absorbed scrutiny of those actually around him but through the press of the world he was watched as closely by hundreds of millions.

The day before he had seemed just a young American of twenty-five who liked to fly and possessed an unusual capacity to do so. Nothing in his education or experience seemed to have fitted him for the rôle he must now play. The most experienced diplomats would have quailed at the test he must undergo. It was as if he were under a gigantic microscope with the whole world peering through it.

The world wished him well—perhaps as fervently as it had wished him success in his flight. The crowd is quick to cast down idols but is always a little disappointed when they fall. All realized that the young American could not be expected always to seem what he had been when first he had swooped out of the

darkness to Le Bourget field. In that moment he had been a demigod. But demigods do not sleep and eat and go about among men. When he awoke he was just a young man who had proved himself capable of a stupendous feat. He was human again, and to be judged as such. But yet all also hoped that he would not prove too human.

His closest well wishers were troubled. He was on such a pinnacle that one false step would throw him far. The French people, warm hearted and whole souled in their love of courage and genius, were in an ecstasy over the handsome young flyer. The whole world was admiring him to almost an equal extent. A trace of braggadocia, natural to a young man and an American, and the idol would tremble. A little strutting and posing and the world, while still appreciating his feat, would be disappointed. For the moment mankind had had one perfect experience, had witnessed an adventure in which there was no flaw. The inevitable letdown would be a pity.

But to Lindbergh there was no crisis. He

solved the problem by not seeing it. When one does not pose there is no pose that need be shunned. He continued to be himself. The riotous welcome at Le Bourget had surprised him. But it had also delighted him. No man but should feel honored at such a reception and he did not attempt to conceal his pleasure.

Honors, official and unofficial, formal and informal, were thrust upon him in almost countless numbers. Any one of them might well have marked the climax of the average man's life. He was hurried from one to the next as if he were being guided among the booths of one of those American county fairs at which he once had been a stunt flier. But still there was that incredible lack of affectation. He never seemed self conscious.

He proved willing from the outset to heed the advice and counsel of Ambassador Herrick. Many of Lindbergh's gracious acts and exhibitions of courtesy might be ascribed to the veteran diplomat's advice. But it was Lindbergh who performed them with a native grace which won the love of the French people

to add to their admiration which was already his. If Herrick suggested his visit to Madame Nungesser it was Lindbergh who embraced and comforted her. If it was Herrick who suggested he always remember that the French were still mourning for Nungesser and Coli it was Lindbergh who pointed out in an address to the Aëro Club that their attempt in flying westward was much more difficult than his in flying eastward.

The President of France, the two chambers of parliament, cabinet members, the two old marshals, Foch and Joffre, in every possible way representative of the French nation—all France paid honor to the young American. There were receptions and parades and banquets. At every gathering he found distinguished men waiting to hear what he had to say—surely an ordeal for the young flier from the Middle West. But he revealed yet another trace of genius. He spoke without much hesitation and spoke well. Again it was his lack of pose. He did not attempt to make an impression. He expressed briefly the few

things that occurred to him to say and then appeared faintly surprised at the wild applause.

But to a cynical and practical world it was his attitude toward wealth that appeared most amazing of all. No sooner had he arrived than immense financial offers were showered upon him. Where he had been offered thousands before leaving New York he was now offered hundreds of thousands. Every one knew that he had been practically penniless when he began his flight. His small savings had been invested in the enterprise. Surely as a reward for such a feat he should be forgiven if he gathered some financial recompense. Therefore when he declined a half million to appear in the movies the world's hat went up with a fling second only to the throw when he had reached Le Bourget.

His financial philosophy was simple. He was not a movie actor. He was an aviator. Flying was his business, one in which he was interested and proficient. He did not intend to abandon it for the make-up pot. Neither was he interested in other offers outside the

aviation field. He did express the modest hope that when he returned to the United States he "might pick up some good aviation job."

His unremitting interest in flying was astounding. Throughout that crowded two weeks in Europe when the program for every day was packed with ceremony he never lost an opportunity to fly or, failing that, to discuss flying. He was never so delighted as when his entertainers gave him a chance to go up in a new type of airplane. And he never touched one, however strange to him its design, that he did not astonish the most experienced observers with his skill. Seeing him climb into a tiny fast French military airplane, one he had never seen before and of especially tricky habits, and then banking up steeply on one wing tip to rollick and loop and sideslip as if he had always flown it was to begin to comprehend some of the mastery of flying that he had acquired. It became clearer and clearer that his great leap across the Atlantic was not just a combination of courage and luck. The man could fly.

Paris had endeared itself to him as he had to the city. When he left it was with the assurance that he would return before leaving for the United States and that at a later date he would surely come back to visit it more privately and leisurely.

He flew to Brussels in The Spirit of St. Louis where he "met his first King" as he naïvely expressed it. He was not yet spoiled. He said what occurred to him.

And then on to England where the Paris and Brussels scenes were repeated. Here he shared interest with the Derby. He did not know what "a flutter" was and he was not especially excited by the Derby. He said as much and the English people forgave in him what they probably would have forgiven in no one else. He found King George "quite democratic" and "enjoyed talking about flying with the Prince of Wales."

It was in London that his hardest decision had to be made. And finally he made it. He had fought every suggestion that The Spirit of St. Louis be knocked down and crated for

shipment back to the United States as if the ship were something alive. It seemed a shame, he said, an indignity, to shut up the beautiful craft and send it back in the hold of a mere water-bound ship after its glorious flight over through the air. But he yielded when it was clear there was no other way.

During those two weeks in Europe Lindbergh unwittingly was America's unofficial ambassador extraordinary. His arrival and his presence had caused the name of America to be cheered up and down Old World streets as the name had not been acclaimed since the war. Debts and other international difficulties were momentarily forgotten. They loomed up again after he left but in the light of the generous and splendid reception tendered the young American flier it will be difficult soon to suggest again that there is any underlying real bitterness between the people of America and Europe.

When he started homeward it was as the guest of the American nation aboard the cruiser *Memphis,* at the invitation of President

Coolidge. The *Memphis* had hardly put to sea before the airplane Columbia, piloted by Clarence Chamberlin, was in the air over the north Atlantic, traversing the great air highway opened up by Lindbergh. In Lindbergh's mind nothing could have been more appropriate. From the moment he had planned his flight he had visualized it as but the forerunner of a great air traffic through skies in which he, the first, had been but a lone pioneer.

(1)

THE END