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William John Eck: First Pan American Airlines Transatlantic Flight Scrapbook

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This is E.O. McDonnell speaking on the Dixie Clipper en route from Lisbon to the Azores. I am one of Pan American's directors travelling with my wife on this flight. The coast of Portugal has just faded from our view. We are flying above broken clouds about 7,000 ft., the sea is calm, a beautiful clear view. The passengers are relaxed, some reading, several playing backgammon. There is very little noise or vibration, and conversation is normal. It has been a wonderful experience, this historic first-passenger flight the result of eleven years of work and planning on the part of Pan American's far flung organization led by our great president Juan Trippe, whose vision, leadership, courage, and indefatigable effort has done more than any one man alive to make finally possible the spanning of the last open link of the chain in the world's air conquest. I am very proud to have been associated with him in a very minor way during those eleven years of preparation.

This is Graham B. Grosvenor, a director of the Pan American Airways, sharing with Mr. Whitney, chairman of the board of our company, three other of my fellow directors and their wives, the thrill of the first 14 commercial passengers to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. These two ladies and twelve gentlemen indicated a long time ago their acceptance for passage on the first flight. They are truly pioneers, as the technicians, the entrepreneur, and the courageous pilot who conducted the first experimental flight.

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