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Fred Wiseman Scrapbook

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[[newspaper page]]

PAGE FOUR THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE BULLETIN SEPTEMBER 1, 1936

LOUIS BLERIOT OF EARLY DAY FAME IS DEAD

[[image - drawing of multiple planes performing in race with observers on the ground]]

"Prix du Tour de Piste"

Rheims, France Aug 1909[[/image]]

[[caption]]CURTISS SWINGS LEFT TO AVOID HITTING SOMNER; BLERIOT WAS FIRST, CURTISS SECOND, IN THE FIRST AERIAL RACE EVER STAGED, RHEIMS, FRANCE, AUG 1909 [[/caption]]

[[first column]]

A typically modern, skeletonized news dispatch states that Louis Bleriot, a pioneer birdman, is dead. He died on Aug. 2, last, at Paris, from a heart attack. He was 64 years old at the time of his demise, and is survived by three married daughters and two grown sons.

[[line]]

It is Aug. 25, 1909, on the Plain of Bethany, near Rheims, France.

[[torn]] second day of the world's first international aviation meet, and every French airman of any consequence is on the scene, ready and eager to engage in a spirited competition for the \$45,000 in cash prizes which have been offered, and for the honor and glory to be gained by a superior display of airmanship.

Housed in tent hangars on the Plain are five Wright biplanes, manufactured under French license, and three aviators, taught their art by Wilbur Wright, to fly them; five Voisin and three Farman biplanes. On the Plain also there are three Antoinette, five Bleriot and three R. E. P. monoplanes.

Paul Tissandier, Count de Lambert and M. Lefebvre are the Wright aviators; Latham is the only qualified pilot for the graceful, but tricky, Antoinettes; and Louis Paulhan, Bunau-Varilla, M. Rogier, and Henri Fournier are the Voisin entries. Captain Ferber is on hand with a machine of his own design. Roger Somner and Henri Farman have Farman biplanes. Louis Breguet has entered the first Breguet which he has built. Maurice Guffoy is the R. E. P. pilot. Louis Bleriot and Leon Delagrang handle the Bleriot. This Bleriot has made, on July 25, of this year, the first flight across the English channel.

To compete against this vast array of eager Frenchmen, and incidentally give the meeting an international flavor, are a lone Englishman, Cockburn, and a lone American, Glenn Hammond Curtiss.

This American is the Glenn Hammond Curtiss who has but recently won a leg on the Scientific American trophy by a remarkable flight of 24.7 miles, the longest public flight made to date in the United States. He has arrived at Rheims with a new, and as yet untried biplane, but he has the confidence in it to mail his friend Stanley Y.

[[/first column]]

[[second column]]Beach, aviation editor of the Scientific American[[sic]] a postcard whch[[sic]] reads as follows:



"Bleriot has five machines here, one 80 h.p. Outside of that I am fastest, I think."

On this day President Fallieres, of the French Republic, is a guest of honor in the crowded stands. Paulhan, veteran flyer of a month's experience has made a 2 hour and 43 minute flight, and Rogier, in his cumbersome, side paneled Voisin, has traveled waveringly a short distance down the course, crashed, and broken his nose.

Now comes the start of the first lap of the Prix du Tour de Piste-a single circuit of the ten kilometer course. The American, Curtiss, in his 40 h.p. biplane is the sixth and last man to get away in what soon proves to be a mad scramble, in the lack of any passing regulations, for position.

Curtiss swings wide at the first turn, and is forced suddenly at the second pylon, to swerve abruptly to the left in order to avoid a collision with Somner's slow-moving Farman biplane, which he is overtaking. Bleriot gets into the lead and finishes first, in 8 minutes and 30 second. Curtiss comes in second. His time in 8 minutes[sic] and 35 seconds.

On the day following Latham wins acclaim for a flight of 2 hours and 18 minutes, covering 12 miles greater distance than Paulhan had on his 2 hour and 43 minute voyage the day before. Latham measured circuits of course total 95.88 mile. The flight is made in a squall of wind and rain, and he is lashed unmercifully by the elements as he pilots the Antoinette about the course.

Two machines crash this day. Bleriot, carrying a passenger in one of his monoplanes, wrecks the machine against a fence in avoiding a squadron of dragoons who have encroached upon the flying field, and Rogier lands his Voisin on top a group of spectators, fortunately without injury to any one of them.

And in the second lap of the Prix du Tour de Piste, Bleriot is again the winner. His time is 8 minutes[sic] and 11 seconds. The American, Curtiss, finishes second, in 8 minutes and 18 seconds.

August 27 is an eventful day of the meet. This is the last day open for official competition for the

[[third column]]

\$30,000 Grand Prix de la Champagne, a distance over a closed circuit event.

Good weather prevails. One after the other, Farman, Latham and Somner take off from the Plain. Tissandier, Bunau-Varilla, Curtiss and several others join the procession at intervals. Latham flies high at 150 feet, while Farman and Somner barely skim the ground on their first circuits. After three laps, or thirty kilometers, Somner lands. Bunau-Varilla covers about the same distance. Curtiss comes down soon after.

Latham drops out at the eleventh lap. Tissandier is down after completing eleven circuits. Count de Lambert lands after his eleventh circuit.

Only Farman remains aloft. Dusk creeps over the field, and he is still in the air. Darkness envelopes him and he is only visible as he flashes by the stands. Nearing the end of his fourth hour in the air, Farman lands in a path of light created by a pair of military searchlights. Time has been

called on him, because darkness makes checking his rounds of the pylons impossible, after 3 hours, 4 minutes and 55 2/5 seconds. The official distance covered by Farman is 111.88 miles, and he is swept up onto the shoulders of his countrymen, while those who remain in the stands respond with a prolonged ovation.

The day of days for Curtiss, the American, is August 28. He has come to France, at the request of Courtland Field Bishop, president of the Aero Club of America, for no other purpose than to lift the James Gordon Bennett Speed trophy. He has carefully abstained from any spectacular exhibition flights because having no spare plane, or ports, one crash would be sufficient to put him out of the running.

The 28th is the day set for the Gordon Bennett contest. The distance to be flown is 20 kilometers, and the contestants may start their official flight at any time during the flying hours of the meet.

In the middle of the afternoon Curtiss hurriedly makes up his mind that the time is right. He checks his machine over carefully once more, fills his gas tank, starts his motor, takes off and climbs to five hundred feet. Circling back on to the course, Curtiss noses his

[[fourth column, continuing previous article]]

plane down slightly to take advantage of a slight increase in speed caused by the descent and is away. He makes the two laps of the course in 15 minutes and 52 seconds, an average of 46 1/2 miles an hour.

Cockburn, the Englishman, takes off, but in a forced landing rams his machine into a haystack. Latham makes an attempt, but his average speed is five or six miles slower than that of Curtiss. The other machines can not exceed 35 miles an hour. It is up to Bleriot to save the day for France.

Curtiss has joined Courtland Field Bishop, who is sitting in an automobile parked at one side of the field, and is anxiously awaiting the result of Bleriot's flight.

When Bleriot, in his 80 h.p. machine, dashed past the grandstand Curtiss thinks the monoplane is moving twice as fast as any machine should be able to fly. When Bleriot again flashes by a few minutes later, Curtiss is convinced the race is lost.

But he is wrong. Bishop has rushed to the stands to get the official time. He rushes back waving his arms in his excitement.

"You win! You win!" he shouts as he approaches the car. "Bleriot is beaten by six seconds."

The stands DO NOT resound with applause. Slowly the tri-color is hauled down from the tribunes, and the Stars and Stripes are hoisted in its place.

America has produced a winner.
[[/fourth column, continuing previous article]]

[[fourth column]]
WILLARD BEATS GLENN H. CURTISS AT INDIANAPOLIS

[[line]]
Cincinnati, Ohio, Nov. 1, 1909 (E. B.)-The three day aeronautical exhibition, held here last month, is said to be the first time two heavier-than-air craft have ever been pitted against one another in actual competition, in this country.

One machine was flown by Glenn H. Curtiss, of Hammondsport, N.Y., the other by Chas. F. Willard, a member of the New York Aeronautical society. The machine which Curtiss used was entered in the aviation meeting, at Rheims, last August and won the Gordon Bennett speed trophy after a thrilling contest with several French aeroplanes. Willard's machine was built by Curtiss for the Aeronautic Society last June. Both craft are similar in appearance, but the Curtiss machine has the more powerful motor.

The competition was held in the Latonia racetrack near here. Cash prizes were posted for altitude and speed, both contests being won by Willard, after Curtiss had damaged his aeroplane by rolling into a wagon when landing.

Willard's machine is christened the "Golden Flier." After he had received one lesson from Curtiss last summer Willard is said to have taught himself to completely master the air ways, and to have become as skilled in the operation of the craft as its builder.

During the summer and fall Willard gave exhibitions in flying at Toronto, Athens, Ga., Richmond, Va., and Philadelphia. At Toronto, circling out over Lake Ontario he made the first over-water flights in this country. Three times he received bad duckings when his engine failed.

Several competitive flights in dirigibles were made by Roy Knabenshue, Lincoln Beachey and Cromwell Dixon, during the three day meet here. Dixon is a seventeen year old boy. His airship was entirely constructed by himself.
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[[fifth column]]
FOWLER ENDS OCEAN TO OCEAN FLYING VOYAGE

[[line]]
Jacksonville, Fla., Feb. 15, 1912 (E.B.)-Ending a coast to coast flight, which he had started in Los Angeles last October, Robert G. Fowler, in his Wright biplane, today flew 18 miles to San Pablo beach, and then returned here.

Fowler's flight, which covered over 2,500 miles and occupied four months, is the second transcontinental voyage on record, the first having been completed by C. P. Rodgers two months ago. Both men started their flights in an effort to win a \$50,00 prize offered by William Randolph Hearst but failed to complete them within the time limit of thirty days, specified in the rules governing the award.

Fowler is 28 years old, and a native of Gilroy, Calif. Prior to his final successful start on October 19, he had made two unsuccessful efforts to clear the high mountain barriers of California. His first effort, on Sept. 11, was a 126 mile flight from San Francisco to Auburn, but on the following day he failed to surmount a 7000 foot mountain pass, and wrecked his aeroplane in some trees at Alta, Calif.

On September 24 the second attempt from northern California was made, and again resulted in failure, after which Fowler decided to try his luck from Los Angeles. On Oct. 19 he flew nine miles to Pasadena. On Oct 21 he flew 60 miles further, and on Oct 24 he reached Yuma, Ariz. On Nov. 5, in a forced landing, the aeroplane was stuck in the sand 15 miles west of El Paso, and not until Nov. 13 did Fowler reach the Texas city. Landing near Fort Worth, a bull charged his plane and wrecked it.

On Feb. 8, after many mishaps, he rose from the flying field at Quitan, 82 miles east of here, and headed for the Atlantic ocean. As he approached Jacksonville, Aviators Harold Katner and Max Millie flew out to meet him, and escorted him to the city.

The flight from Quitan required only 90 minutes. Minor adjustments to the machine caused Fowler to delay the official finish of his flight seven days.

During the later stages of his transcontinental journey Fowler carried a motion picture camera and operator. Many hundreds of feet of moving pictures were taken from the air.
[[line]]

EUGENE ELY IN CRASH

(Continued from Page 3)

[[line]]

Ovington was rated as one of the big money winners in competition and exhibition flights in 1911. One of his noteworthy flights was a 186 mile race, which he won from \$4,172. He was first in two 12-mile biplane races there, and won a quick climbing contest.

Following his Chicago appearance Ely attempted a Chicago-New York flight but gave up the attempt after several mishaps. He next flew at a meet held in Boston, and at another held at Nassau Blvd.

It was at Boston, after Clause Grahame-White, the Englishman, had secured the postponement of a 30-mile race to Boston Light and back, because of a high wind, that Ely and Lincoln Beachey, to exhibit their disgust at the situation, made the voyage anyhow.

Ely is said to have won only a few hundred dollars at Boston and at Nassau Blvd.

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