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*Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives*

## **Blanche Stuart Scott Collection - Scripts and Manuscripts**

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This launched the barnstorming era ~~and~~ the bucks became hard to find. They discovered the general public was getting used to the idea of airplanes. Promoters, too, were a little shy about posting handsome sums of money and would no longer offer guarantees. Occasionally a field with a good grandstand complete with admission gate would be secured and that would get some money. None of the barnstormers ever equaled either in single performances or when they abandoned a barnstorming career had even come close to the earnings of the pioneer pilots. Many times they flew in open fields with no seating arrangements and no admission price. One of the company passed the hat during the show and split the take. This was a very precarious way to pick up operating expenses so barnstorming gradually disappeared.

The climactic event of the summer, however, was my appearance in a motion picture. Motion pictures, like flying, had a pioneer stage and after World War One, the motion picture theatre began to be patronized by respectable people. Movies were on their way to popularity. I was approached by the Champion Motion Picture Company of New Jersey, which had decided to capitalize on the growing popularity of aviation with the first drama about flying. I was offered the lead. I accepted with alacrity. Motion pictures were new and exciting. I'd be flying so why not? It was so very, very convenient. The locale of the story was Mineola Field. The leading man was Lee Hammond, not only a handsome stack of man but a pioneer flier and a grand person. Most of the story detail eludes me. I do recall the titled—it sounded like a pioneer soap, "The Aviator's Bride. We had a ball making the picture. ~~and~~ One incident stands out in my mind when all the trivia has gone. In one of the scenes, I was to land and roll the plane right up to the camera for one of the early close-ups. This sounds simple. With those early plane with no brakes, it was almost impossible to plan the exact stopping spot. The halting point was the result of the terrain.

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