Hattie Meyers Junkin Papers - Newspaper articles, 1932 - 1936

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[[Headline, cut-off, only second line is on page]] After Wing Is Lost
By THOMAS J. MCCARTHY
Star-Gazette Staff Writer
While several hundred spectators stood paralyzed by fear, Aviation Cadet Robert M. Stanley fought a life and death battle - and won--high over Harris Hill after a wing on his sailplane collapsed late Friday afternoon. The pilot landed about half a mile west of Harris Hill and the damaged plane came down in Rhoades farm cornfield.
Eyes of nearly every spectator were on the silvery craft when the wing crumpled while Stanley was doing aerobatic maneuvers.
for minutes that seemed like eternity, the crowd watched the spinning, whirling craft plunge toward earth waiting breathlessly for the pilot to leap out and ride safely to the earth under his parachute.
But Stanley was fighting a tremendous centrifugal force in the narrow confines of his cockpit. He was pressed into the seat by the motion of the craft and was exerting every ounce of strength to get free. In attempting to twist himself upright, he accidentally pulled the ripcord of the parachute and the silken folds flowed out of the pack and draped loosely about him.
When he did stand up, his left foot was caught in the controls. With precious altitude being lost every second, he wrenched his foot from the shoe and hurtled over the side of the craft, praying that the parachute would not be fouled.
To the relief of every person on the field, not to mention Stanley himself, the parachute streamed out after him and blossomed into a huge umbrella. The small pilot parachute which usually helps open the main pack, was caught in the foot pedals and tore lose, remaining in the ship.
Even after he was free, Stanley was not out of danger. The hurtling plane followed him closely and the broken wing threatened to cut the 'chute or become entangled in the cords.
As the parachute billowed into its full width, the falling wing detached from the plane floated above. It passed over the umbrella with few feet to spare and came around a second time so near that Stanley drew up his legs, fearing he would be struck.
A majority of the spectators believed the wing had struck and stunned the pilot. After it passed below him, he hung rigidly under the parachute.
A few seconds later he was seen to move his arms and spectators who had held their breaths during the tense drama in the sky, exhaled in joyous relief. By pulling the cords, he steered a course away from a solid forest of trees which laid in his path.
When he neared the ground, he saw a small tree standing close by and side-slipped the 'chute so that he was able to fall into the tree and slide gently through the branches to the group.
The only injuries Stanley received were bruises on his legs just about the knees, caused by being throw [[thrown]] against the instrument panel by the motion of the plane while he was attempting to stand up.
The plane itself was not damaged as badly as might be expected when it landed without the expert hand of a pilot at the controls. The right wing was not even scratched and the tire on the wheel was not punctured.
The tail assembly and the fuselage were damaged only slightly.
Stanley emphasized that he was not making a routine flight when the wing collasped [[collapsed]]. He went aloft especially to give the aerobatic exhibition for the benefit of the spectators and distinguished guests on the field.
Last week Stanley damaged the wing in making a landing in a wheat field and had made the necessary repairs so that he could resume competition. Friday offered an opportunity to test the stability of the repaired wing.
Stanley put the craft into a dive and when he reached a speed of 100 miles an hour, went into a sharp spiral. The twist exerted the greatest strain possible.


After Wing Is Lost

The wing broke where the patch had been made. The great force shattered a section into fragments and the hundreds of splinters whirled like chaff around the floundering plane.
Stanley was about 2,500 feet above the hill when the wing collapsed and the craft dropped 1,000 feet while he was struggling to extricate himself. In the light of what followed, he believees [[believes]] that he could have ridden the ship to the ground safely. Instead of going into a nose dive as might be expected, the ship make wide circles on an even keel although there was only a stub remaining of the left wing.
After getting out of the tree in which he landed, Stanley cut through the woods and hurried back to the headquarters site to assure contest officials that he was unharmed.
He spoke not of his narrow escape from death but of the "interesting" features of the experience.
"It was the first time I had ever seen my plane in flight and even with one wing gone, she was a beauty," he declared.
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[[Headline is missing, picture of dark-haired girl in dress is to the right of the article]]
By MARION STOCKER
Star-Gazette Staff Writer
IT IS seven years since Mrs. Hattie Junkin flew a glider, and seven years since she last attended a National Soaring Contest here. Yet Mrs. Junkin has the distinction of being the first woman in the United States to earn a C-license.
That was back in the '31 in the primitive days before "thermals," when a handful of daredevil enthusiasts "dodged cabbages" on South Mountain--"Souse" Mountain,' the German lads persisted in mispronouncing it," she chuckled.
--"gliders are expensive" mourned the attractive little woman as she sat in the shade outside her cabin on Harris Hill, " and I have a son and daughter to educate--"
But the fact that her license has lapsed through disuse doesn't "get her down." She has weathered much greater vicissitudes than that. Her life has been filled with glorious "ups" and tragic "downs" --enough to fill a book, and that is exactly what it will do one of these days. Even now her story is being prepared for a newspaper syndicate.
Mrs. Junkin's interest in aviation dates from her childhood when she and her brother, Charles, build model planes in imitation of their hero, Percy Pierce. Years later she met the famous Percy--now head of the Model Builders Association of America.
She helped her 'teen age brother fashion the huge wings on which he actually took one flight--hanging suspended by his arms!--before the crash which left him slightly dazed but undaunted.
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THEN DURING the World War, when barely 19, she married George "Buck" Weaver, civilian flying instructor at the Waco, Tex., War School. She worked and starved and fought with him for five years after the war when he founded the Weaver Aircraft Company and struggled to put aircraft production and distribution on a sound financial basis.
She saw the birth of the first "Waco" and participated in it chistening [[christening]]. "Buck" and his pal, "Sam" Junkin, discovered that joy --like the present-day "Whoopee!" --used among the flying school's students, also initiated Weaver Aircraft Co. The name for their new craft fitted like a glove!
"Buck's" death in 1924 came as a bitter blow. After a year she married her first husband's best friend and partner, Mr. Junkin. Scarcely a year later, he, too, died, leaving her with a small son by her first husband and a tiny, new born baby girl.
The years that followed were "like a nightmare." The Weaver Company, prospering now, slipped into other hands. In 1929, she married Lieut.

Ralph Stanton Barnaby. Divorce 1934 [[Divorce 1934 is hand written]]
Through him she met many a famous figure in the world of aviation and found herself, in 1930 on Cape Cod with a group of young soaring enthusiasts from Germany and a handful of thrill-seeking Americans.
"I loved to fly, couldn't afford a plane, and thought a glider might be within my financial possibilities."
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WHILE ATTEMPTING to learn lateral balance and a feeling for control in the old German "primaries," a breaking process, she received a letter from her old friend, R. E. Franklin urging her to join him at Elmira and try a lighter ship.
"It was a great crown that gathered here," she recalled, "and a motley assortment of ships compared with those of today--heavy things with almost no controls. They couldn't sail very high, with their weight and rubber winch hand launching. But we had fun--and gliding answered my fondest dreams of freedom, serenity and release.
"Some of the old crowd are on
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FIRST women in the United States to receiv
C-license for gliding was Mrs. Hattie Jun
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[[first letter not legible]]'31. With her, left, is her daughter, Janet.

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