



Smithsonian Institution

Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives

Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Fowler, Robert G.

Extracted on Apr-19-2024 04:15:10

The Smithsonian Institution thanks all digital volunteers that transcribed and reviewed this material. Your work enriches Smithsonian collections, making them available to anyone with an interest in using them.

The Smithsonian Institution (the "Smithsonian") provides the content on this website (transcription.si.edu), other Smithsonian websites, and third-party sites on which it maintains a presence ("SI Websites") in support of its mission for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." The Smithsonian invites visitors to use its online content for personal, educational and other non-commercial purposes. By using this website, you accept and agree to abide by the [following terms](#).

- If sharing the material in personal and educational contexts, please cite the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives as source of the content and the project title as provided at the top of the document. Include the accession number or collection name; when possible, link to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives website.
- If you wish to use this material in a for-profit publication, exhibition, or online project, please contact Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives or transcribe@si.edu

For more information on this project and related material, contact the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives. [See this project](#) and other collections in the Smithsonian Transcription Center.

picture machine" throughout the trip. Four times Fowler was forced down in areas where he could not possibly get out except by taking the plane to the nearest railroad and loading it onto a flat hard ~~tool~~ car to make his take~~off~~ run down the tracks. On one of these occasions he saw a train coming just as he was ready to take off. The engineer saw a queer sight ahead and applied the brakes. Fowler hurried to take ~~off~~ just cleared the approaching locomotive, and as a result earned the title of "Hand Car Bob." This was undoubtedly the first time this resourceful method was ever used to get an airplane ~~aeroplane~~ into the air. He also made exhibition flights at many of the major towns along the route.

Fowler reached Jacksonville, Florida on February 8th, 1912 and landed on the Moncrief Race Track at 4:30 ~~P.M.~~ Max Lillie and Harold Kantner, who were flying an exhibition date there, greeted him in the air and escorted him into the field. On February 17th he flew on to Pablo Beach, Florida, a coastal resort, to land in the actual surf, 112 days and 2,520 miles from his starting point in California. His actual flying time was seventy-two ~~72~~ hours in ~~on~~ in 45 days. The remaining days were spent making repairs and waiting on weather. Reported the same engine was used for the entire trip except about the last 140 miles. On the average, every third landing was a forced one, engine valves and spark plugs being the most serious problems. Ninety-six ~~96~~ spark plugs were used on the trip. In Louisiana he carried needed serum to people when all the roads were under water.

While Rodgers succeeded in crossing the continent first, ~~and in somewhat less time,~~ Fowler's feat of crossing the southern section of the country at that time of year certainly deserves ~~at least~~ equal credit for sheer determination and flying skill. For some 350 miles between western Louisiana and Mobile, Alabama, there were no possible landing places enroute, just ~~except~~ dense timber, cane stubble, rice fields, marshlands and Gulf waters. He was forced down in deep soft sand, and at other places in water as much as 12 to 15 inches deep, neither of which he could possibly takeoff from, and he was plagued by incessant rains over much of the route. After a brief rest in Florida, Fowler started flying exhibitions and on

picture machine" throughout the trip. Four times Fowler was forced down in areas where he could not possibly get out except by taking the plane to the nearest railroad and loading it onto a flat ~~tool~~ ^{hand-}car to make his take-off run down the tracks. On one of these occasions he saw a train coming just as he was ready to take off. The engineer saw a queer sight ahead and applied the brakes. Fowler hurried to take off, and just cleared the approaching locomotive, and as a result earned the title of "Hand Car Bob." This was undoubtedly the first time this resourceful method was ever used to get an ^{aeroplane} airplane into the air. He also made exhibition flights at many of the major towns along the route.

Fowler reached Jacksonville, Florida, on February 8th, 1912, and landed at the Moncrief Race Track at 4:30 P.M. Max Lillie and Harold Kantner, who were flying an exhibition date there, greeted him in the air and escorted him into the field. On February 17th he flew on to Pablo Beach, Florida, a coast resort, to land in the actual surf, 112 days and 2,520 miles from his start in California. His actual flying time was 72 hours ^{or} 45 days. The remaining days were spent making repairs and waiting on weather. Reportedly the same engine was used for the entire trip except about the last 140 miles. On the average, every third landing was a forced one, engine valves and spark plugs being the most serious problem. ^{Ninety-six} 96 spark plugs were used on the trip. In Louisiana he carried needed serum to people when all the roads were under water.

While Rodgers succeeded in crossing the continent first, ~~and in somewhat less time,~~ Fowler's feat of crossing the southern section of the country at that time of year certainly deserves ~~at least~~ equal credit for sheer determination and flying skill. For some 350 miles between western Louisiana and Mobile, Alabama, there were no possible landing places enroute, ~~except~~ dense timber, cane stubble, rice fields, marsh lands and Gulf waters. He was forced down in deep soft sand, and at other places in water as much as 12 to 15 inches deep, neither of which he could possibly take off from, and he was plagued by incessant rains over much of the route.

After a brief rest in Florida, Fowler started flying exhibitions and on

Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Fowler, Robert G.
Transcribed and Reviewed by Digital Volunteers
Extracted Apr-19-2024 04:15:10



Smithsonian Institution

Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives

The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities. Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

Join us!

The Transcription Center: <https://transcription.si.edu>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SmithsonianTranscriptionCenter>

On Twitter: [@TranscribeSI](https://twitter.com/TranscribeSI)

Connect with the Smithsonian

Smithsonian Institution: www.si.edu

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Smithsonian>

On Twitter: [@smithsonian](https://twitter.com/smithsonian)