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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Rodgers, Calbraith Perry

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[[stamped]] FROM THE FLYING PIONEERS BIOGRAPHIES OF
HAROLD E. MOREHOUSE [[/stamped]]

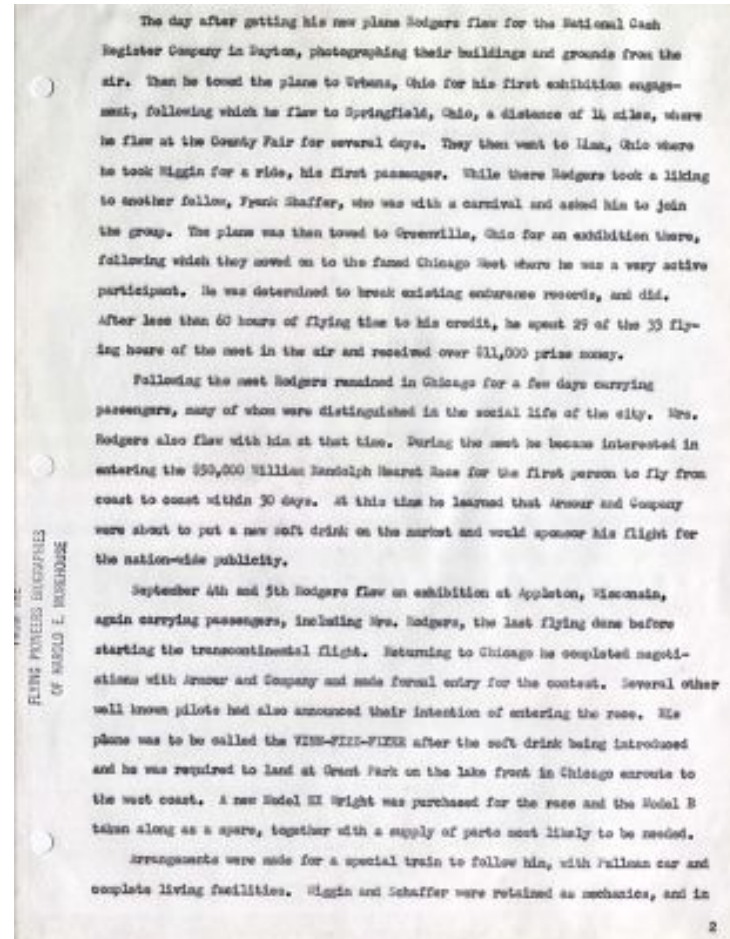
The day after getting his new plane Rodgers flew for the National Cash Register Company in Dayton, photographing their buildings and grounds from the air. Then he towed the plane to Urbana, Ohio for his first exhibition engagement, following which he flew to Springfield, Ohio, a distance of 14 miles, where he flew at the County Fair for several days. They then went to Lima, Ohio where he took Wiggin for a ride, his first passenger. While there Rodgers took a liking to another fellow, Frank Shaffer, who was with a carnival and asked him to join the group. The plane was then towed to Greenville, Ohio for an exhibition there, following which they moved on to the famed Chicago Meet where he was a very active participant. He was determined to break existing endurance records, and did. After less than 60 hours of flying time to his credit, he spent 29 of the 33 flying hours of the meet in the air and received over \$11,000 prize money.

Following the meet Rodgers remained in Chicago for a few days carrying passengers, many of whom were distinguished in the social life of the city. Mrs. Rodgers also flew with him at that time. During the meet became interested in entering the \$50,000 William Randolph Hearst Race for the first person to fly from coast to coast within 30 days. At this time he learned that Armour and Company were about to put a new soft drink on the market and would sponsor his fight for the nation-wide publicity.

September 4th and 5th Rodgers flew an exhibition at Appleton, Wisconsin, again carrying passengers, including Mrs. Rodgers, the last flying done before starting the transcontinental flight. Returning to Chicago he completed negotiations with Armour and Company and made formal entry for the contest. Several other well known pilots had also announced their intention of entering the race. His plane was to be called the VINN-FIZZ-FLYER after the soft drink being introduced and he was required to land at Grant Park on the lake front in Chicago enroute to the west coast. A new Model EX Wright was purchased for the race and the Model B taken along as a spare, together with a supply of parts most likely to be needed.

Arrangements were made for a special train to follow him, with Pullman car and complete living facilities. Wiggin and Schaffer were retained as mechanics, and in

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