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FLYING



Assembling hundreds of farmers' queries in a sizeable scrapbook, Frank Bill flew them to Washington. He is shown above placing his baggage aboard Scoop IV for the return trip. The trip was a success.

NINE years of airplane news coverage and photography by *The Daily Pantagraph* of Bloomington, Illinois, have definitely proved that the aerial way is a distinct service, not an adventure—an asset, not a risk.

In all, there have been four planes—"Scoops I, II, III and IV"—beginning with an OX-5 Waco biplane. Scoop I was purchased in June, 1929, and was christened the following month at a "Central Illinois Air Derby" at the then 72-acre Bloomington airport.

With upward of 2,000 hours in the air and approximately 4,000 aerial photographs, *The Pantagraph's* airplanes have proved their news gathering value time after time. They have taken reporters and photographers over floods, over snow-bound countryside to train wrecks, fires, funerals of state, and on more peaceful rural photographic missions.

Latest, most imposing service of the *Pantagraph* airplane was its use in taking Frank Bill, farm editor, and Charles Driver, reporter-photographer, to Washington, D. C. Art Carnahan, who holds a transport rating, is the regular pilot.

Bloomington being in the heart of McLean county—accounted the third richest agricultural county in the nation—the implications of the AAA were all-important to *The Pantagraph* and its preponderance of farmer readers. Interpretations of the AAA were not altogether satisfactory. Mr. Bill, who is also the ace veteran aerial photographer for the publication, spent weeks visiting farmers of the newspaper's territory. He gathered hundreds of pertinent questions pertaining to the AAA. Assembling these queries in a sizeable scrapbook, off he went to the capital to lay them before Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace and other AAA officials.

The 700 mile hop was negotiated in Scoop IV, a Stinson *Reliant*, with only a stop at Columbus, Ohio, for refueling

Few American newspapers are as staunchly and continuously air-minded as the Bloomington (Ill.) *Pantagraph*. Here is the story of how that enterprising publication uses its airplanes for anything from photography to missionary work to Washington for its many farmer-readers.

and luncheon, both ways. Ground and air cameras, portable typewriters and personal effects were in the baggage compartment. Leaving June 28, the three men returned to the present 164-acre Municipal airport June 30. Replies to the farmers' queries now are being published for the edification of all interested farmers.

Aside from the hundreds of "good will hops" in which municipal and other officials have been taken aloft in the four Scoops, there are many interesting insights on the value of the airplane. A. T. Anderson, prominent Pontiac, Ill., landowner, said after a significantly revealing flight, "I wouldn't dream of buying a farm without first viewing it from the

air in order to see the layout, the thin spots, the drainage area, the missing corn hills."

J. B. Andrews of the University of Illinois agriculture college, discovered that the scope of Canada thistle invasion could be easily detected from the air, whereas it could be learned on the ground only by word of mouth.

"Crop reporters," said Farm Adviser J. H. Checkley of Logan county, after a countryside aerial tour, "should have airplanes. Then they could report more accurately."

In all this news flying, *Pantagraph* ships have never had a mishap. Nearest thing was in one of the old Waco biplanes when

Frank Bill, the *Pantagraph's* farm editor, is shown below discussing his newspaper's voluminous farm-problems scrapbook with Secretary of Agriculture Wallace (right).



SCOOPS

by W. ELDRED RICHARDSON



Left to right are Publisher Merwin, Charles Driver, Pilot Carnahan and Frank Bill.

Editor Bill's foot snagged a valve and dumped the gasoline supply. Pilot Carnahan glided to a perfect landing in a wheat field. Fuel was obtained from a farmer's tractor supply and the ship returned to its home port.

Safety is always stressed. There are regular inspections and adjustments, of course. The photographer directs the flight but the pilot has the authority to refuse to place the ship in unsafe positions—no matter what the proposed picture may be. An illustration of this was in connection with the opening of an Illinois river bridge at Pekin in Scoop II, a Waco powered with a Wright *Hairwind* J-6 engine. Separate cockpits meant

This photograph was taken by a Pantagraph plane and is of one of the Illinois farms photographed in that paper's highly popular contest.



Scoop I was this old Waco "10" bought in June, 1930, the Pantagraph's first ship.

The Daily
Pantagraph
Bloomington, Illinois

Both farmers and aviation people are familiar with this sign on Scoop's fuselage.

the use of manual signals from the photographer as to the desired picture positions.

The ship was headed south when the cameraman asked for a low position which would enable him not only to photograph the new bridge but the city's waterfront as well. The pilot refused because, as he explained afterward, the flight direction would have meant a plop in the river in case of engine trouble. Carnahan turned about, heading in the opposite direction and managed the desired 400 foot altitude—but ahead lay a smooth drainage district in which an emergency landing would have been possible.

Scoop III, a Stinson *Junior*, was nearly "scooped" on the Chicago stock yards fire. Bill and Carnahan had been to the city to get aerial shots of A Century of Progress. Though Scoop III had been delivered unequipped with radio, a set had been installed with a ball-weighted trailing aerial with which they amused themselves en route to Chicago.

After they left the Windy City the fire broke out—but they were indifferent to the radio and the aerial was neatly coiled inside the cabin. They heard none of the fire reports until they landed at Bloomington. The ship was hastily refueled and back they sped to get their pictures.

"Obviously," said Bill, "the altitude secured in a plane provides photographic scenes impossible from the ground. The airplane's speed and its ability to go cross-country without following congested highways make it far more speedy and dependable than automobile travel. The airplane has proved ideal, for instance, to present a picture of a corn husking contest where thousands of spectators and contestants are scattered over a wide area.

Another Scoop identity contest picture was this one of Chatsworth, Ill. Pantagraph readers guessed it easily.





News coverage is an important function of the Pantagraph's Scoops. Below is an assignment covered—a tornado that nearly wiped out South Pekin, Ill., early this year.

"We were able to get a picture of all of Lake Bloomington on one film. Other views have shown the Alton railroad shops in their entirety; or the entire length of the McLean county centennial celebration parade—even though it covered a distance of 22 blocks.

"On many occasions, Scoop pictures have graphically depicted widespread flood conditions in different parts of Illinois—views that showed highways and railroads washed out, bridges missing, livestock standing or swimming to high points—views, in short, that would have been impossible from the ground, or from a boat, when the vital time element of newspaper publishing is considered."

Everyone in central Illinois knows the familiar orange and black Scoop. Approximately 1,200 pictures of outstanding farms have been published with rewards offered for their identification. More than 1,000 of these have been identified by owners who thereupon received framed and suitably inscribed original photographs. A good will gesture? Certainly, but also a service to the farmer showing him those glaring errors of land or layout that are not readily perceived from the ground.

Bill's aerial experiences have led him into the field of target bombing. Harm-

less bombs, to be sure—copies "hot off the press" containing World Series or other extras. Bundles of newspapers, tightly wired in corrugated wrappings are methodically dropped off at 20 towns in Bloomington's area which would otherwise receive no detailed account of these events until the next day.

Here is the way the delivery log, as worked up by the circulation department and handed Bill, reads:

"Heyworth—west and south of high school, southwest of town, one block west of State Route 2. Clinton—east of town, in ball park. Weldon—southeast part of town, south of Illinois Central railroad, in pasture," and so on. Local agents are on hand to snatch up the "bombs"; break them open and deliver them.

In the winter of 1930, there was a serious train wreck at Forrest, nearly 50 miles from Bloomington by air and considerably farther by road—if the roads could have been used. There had been a blizzard the night before and all highways were effectually blocked by drifts. Open fields in most cases had been swept bare by the gale. On this chance, the flight was made. Even though a landing were impossible, air shots could be taken

(Continued on page 78)



Another example of Pantagraph air-mindedness is the annual Central Illinois Air Derby sponsored by the paper. Above is a typical crowd that attended a recent derby.

Know Your Markings?

THE following table will—we hope—put a stop to the hundreds of letters that come into these offices asking where such-and-such an airplane is from or what those big block letters on the fuselage and wings mean. With the exception of the United States, the commercial airplanes of the countries of the world are identified solely by a series of letters. Only letters used as international identification for American aircraft is "N". The following table gives a complete list of all international aircraft markings.

Example: CF-XYZ is a Canadian; PH-XYZ is from Holland; ZK-XYZ, New Zealand, etc.

CC	Chile
CF	Canada
CL or CM	Cuba
CN	Morocco
CP	Bolivia
CR	Portuguese colonies
CS	Portugal
CX	Uruguay
CZ	Monaco
D	Germany
EC	Spain
EJ	Ireland
EL	Liberia
ES	Estonia
EZ	Saar
F	France and colonies
G	Great Britain
HA	Hungary
HC	Ecuador
HB	Switzerland
HH	Haiti
HJ	Dominican Republic
HJ	Columbia
HR	Honduran Republic
HS	Siam
I	Italy and colonies
J	Japan
LN	Norway
LZ	Bulgaria
N	United States of America
OB	Peru
OE	Austria
OH	Finland
OK	Czechoslovakia
OO	Belgium
OY	Denmark
PH	Holland
PJ	Curacao
PP	Brazil
PZ	Surinam (Netherlands West Indies)
PK	Netherlands East Indies
RV	Persia
RX	Panama
RY	Lithuania
SE	Sweden
SP	Poland
SU	Egypt
SX	Greece
TC	Turkey
TF	Iceland
TG	Guatemala
TI	Costa Rica
UL	Luxembourg
URSS	Russia
VH	Australia

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(Continued on page 89)



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It is the reality of the future, manifested in the dreams of the present. All great inventions were foreshadowed by fiction. Jules Verne wrote "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea" and created a submarine in fiction. Today that submarine is an actuality, and amazingly faithful in all detail to Verne's vessel. The dreams of today are tomorrow's realities. If you believe in man's future, then why not read the magazine of science fiction? Read of the logical inventions of the future as imagined by the top writers of today, the writers with vision, presented in an entertaining manner in story form, in

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Flying Scoops

(Continued from page 42)

of the piled up cars and locomotive. But luck was with the airmen. They found a suitable field within 200 feet of the wreck and landed in only five inches of snow.

Bill not only got his aerial views, but intimate ground pictures as well. He was far too pleased over the happy combination to complain about floundering through drifts up to his armpits.

The name "Scoop" is intended as it would seem to be defined. It means that *The Pantagraph* usually has the jump on all its central Illinois competitors because it alone operates an airplane. The name was selected in a contest in which 1,200 suggested designations were submitted.

Scoop II also was flown to victory in the 1929 National Air Races by John Livingston of Aurora. To Davis Merwin, former publisher of *The Pantagraph*, goes the credit for not only promoting aviation's interests in central Illinois, but for making that section of the state "air-minded" back in 1929. A pilot himself, he was among the first to discern the enormous advantages to "spot" news coverage through utilizing the airplane. Then, when it was found that the propeller blast interfered seriously with the operation of ordinary newspaper cameras, a special aerial camera was purchased in 1930.

Good pictures had been obtained before that, though, for Scoop I, the first Waco hurried aloft to the distinction of meeting the *Graf Zeppelin* on its world flight and enabled *Pantagraph* readers to see pictures of the airship in actual flight over Illinois.

When the original Bloomington airport north of the city—a 72 acre tract—became obsolete in 1932 because of its size, businessmen of the city contributed \$25,000 with which to purchase the present 164-acre municipal field east of the city on State Route 9. It was a non-speculative plan of making the land available to the city under lease with option to purchase. The city subsequently leased the port and is in charge of its operation.

END

Gas Model

(Continued from page 63)

builder as being an unworthy piece of construction. In covering the fuselage it is best to cover it in long narrow strips from front to rear. Smooth down any rough edges with dope used in attaching bamboo paper to framework. Incidentally, dope used for attaching the paper is ordinarily model airplane cement cut with about 25 per cent 30 per cent thinner. Covering the wings is a much simpler job than the body, but make sure that the paper is cemented to every rib on the under surface so as to keep the curved section when paper is shrunk. The paper on the top side of wing panel may be only fastened to every fourth rib or so. When applying the water to the paper parts, make sure they are held securely in position by means of blocks to prevent them from warping out of shape. After all these parts have become thoroughly dry, two or three coats of model airplane dope are given them with a light sanding before each coat. The colors are next applied.

Before making the flying test, check the model for alignment and for the security of the various parts. Tighten all parts that may have been loosened by the shrinkage of the covering and check propeller fastenings.

Testing and Flying the Model

This should be done preferably over tall grass or weeds so as to prevent any injury to the model. Adjust batteries so that when model is held by fingers from either wing tip one-third of the way back from leading edge, it will balance with the nose pointing down about one or two degrees. Next launch the model from the hands into the tall grass or weeds so that you may determine whether it glides to the ground without stalling or diving. If either of the two should occur, move the battery on the rack to correct for it. When testing the model under power, the throttle should not be completely opened until you are thoroughly familiar with the ship's behavior. A few trial flights will acquaint you with its different maneuvers.

END

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