

CITY JUST MISSED BEING CRADLE OF THE AIRPLANE

Only Lack of Money Kept Grant Keys From Success in 1904.

Although the Semi-Centennial Union Pacific celebration next week has to do primarily with the 50th anniversary of the first coming of the railroad to Eastern Oregon, a word about the airplane also might not be amiss.

Present La Grande, site of a fine municipal airport and destined to greater progress in aviation circles with each passing year, may look back to the year 1904—just thirty years ago—to what some might term its first start in heavier-than-air craft.

It's a good yarn. Just as a prelude, it might be noted that Grant Keys, now a resident of Western Springs, Ill., built his first kite in the early 90s, near the Morgan lake hydro-electric plant. He was so delighted with his success with kites and his belief in the future of flying, that in 1904, he constructed what La Grande may call its first airplane, regardless of whether it was a success or not.

Actually, he was unable to fly because of his inability to obtain motive power due to lack of finances. Later a storm wrecked his plane and, at the end of his resources he gave up when he was on the verge of beating the Wright brothers to success.

The La Grande Citizen, a weekly newspaper, tells of his early inventions in the following interesting article:

"A chance of fate snatched fame from the hands of Grant Keys years ago. This resident of Western Springs, now an engineer at the La Grande plant of the Public Service company, invented an airplane at La Grande, Ore., several years before Orville Wright achieved world renown by his successful flight of a motor-driven aircraft.

While he is unknown to the world, Keys is undoubtedly one of the pioneers of aviation. His giant ship, the object of an amused populace of the Oregon community, was designed along lines later used successfully by Wright.

Noticing the ease with which buzzards and other huge birds could soar in the air for hours with little effort, Keys became convinced that man could achieve the same results. While his friends smiled politely and the town wondered in amusement, Keys constructed a giant kite out of bamboo and steel wire, covering the wings with silk.

His first experiments were made with his aerial craft. With a long strand of steel wire, Keys guided the kite into the air. The craft climbed higher and higher with the impetus of the strong wind. Then the first misfortune of the series happened. He had made the wings of the plane level instead of slightly bowed, and when the plane dipped to one side as the wind changed, it toppled to the earth, unable to regain its equilibrium.

Pleased by the initial success, Keys constructed another plane, but this time designed the wings so that they bowed slightly. This principle was used several years later by Orville Wright and has been in vogue since. The second plane met misfortune when Keys lost control of the huge craft in the air, and it fell to earth and crumpled like paper.

The summer before the Lewis and Clark exposition at Portland, Ore., Keys completed his third plane.

The story goes on to state that the plane was to be driven by propellers, with a gasoline engine as motive power, and that it was a double airplane—each plane being 40 feet long, by 12 feet wide and eight feet apart, and equipped with two guiding planes, each 24 feet long by 40 inches wide. Suspended three feet below the lower plane was a basket, six feet square, to which were attached four bicycle wheels to be used in arising or alighting.

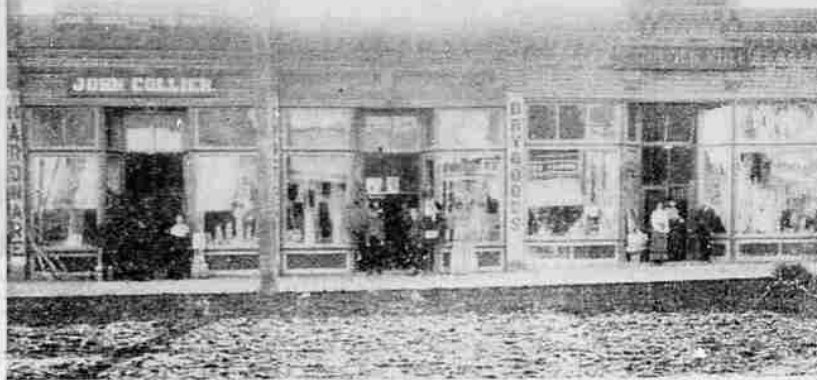
Keys, however, was unable to raise enough funds to obtain a gasoline motor light enough to answer the purpose, and before his dream of really flying was realized, a storm wrecked his machine.

That is how close La Grande came to being the cradle of modern aviation.

BIG GRAZING COUNTRY

Nearly 100,000 beef cattle graze the ranges of Eastern Oregon annually as well as 2,000,000 sheep, making this section one of the most important range livestock regions of the nation.

La Grande Stores in The Early Days of New Town



A view of a portion of La Grande' business section in the early days. The two stores above—John Collier's Hardware and Crockery Store, and the Golden Rule — Dry Goods, Notions and Furnishings — were in the Huntington building on Adams avenue, now occupied by the Hoover market. Note the wide board sidewalks and the muddy streets.

ATTACKED BY INDIANS

James McClure and Jake Nibler were in La Grande before the coming of the railroad, and these men, who were youths at that time, were with a party of freighters who were attacked by Indians

west of the Blue mountains in 1817, when a number of white men were killed. The two boys and several men escaped by hiding in the brush and timber, and later made their way back to La Grande to tell their adventures.

FIRST TO PREACH GOSPEL HERE

Rev. H. K. Hines, a Methodist minister prominent in the early history of the state of Oregon, was the first man to preach the gospel to the pioneers in the Grande Ronde valley.

ROUND-UP TO BE SEPT. 13-15 IN PENDLETON

This year's Pendleton Round-Up, to be held Sept. 13, 14 and 15 at Pendleton, will be the silver jubilee of the famous western event, and in connection with this phase, will stand out as "The Epic Drama of the West."

Cowboys from western states, Canada and Mexico will vie for world championships in riding vicious broncs, bulldozing and roping long horn steers and riding relay and pony express races. More than 2000 Indians from the northwest tribes will take part in the daily parades and events. The Westward Ho! parade will be held Friday morning, Sept. 14, depicting transportation methods used in the days of the covered wagon, stage coach and pony express.

Each night beginning with Wednesday, Sept. 12, Happy Canyon stages its famous pageant depicting the coming of the white man to the northwest.

MANY SWIM WALLOWA LAKE

Eight persons have swam the length of Wallowa lake since it was first accomplished on Aug. 15, 1925. Helen Carson was the first mermaid to turn the trick. Others were Stella Dery, Florence Hurley, Margaret Boyd, Mrs. Charles Binger, Maurice Wels, Lyle Baird and Ben Oesterling. Oesterling has the best time of 1:58:00, and also swam two lengths of the lake Aug. 6, 1933 in 4 hours and 32 minutes.



"The Best They Had in the Catalog—"

Montgomery Ward was already a popular name in every home back in those days of fancy feather boas and round crusted toppers. Not the great retail store organization it is today, but in those years a great mail order house, known for quality of merchandise and dependability of service. "Send for it to Montgomery Ward's" was a household phrase.

Today Our Huge Mail Order Business Still Continues With the addition thereto of

Over 500 Great Retail Stores Over the U. S.

"Satisfaction or Your Money Back" —A Slogan that Pleases.

MONTGOMERY WARD

We are indeed grateful for the patronage of the railroad employees of this district who have contributed in a large measure to the success of our store in La Grande.