

America Fast Losing Aces of the Air

BY GEORGE BRITT
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The American army is losing its crack flyers.

The resignation of Lieutenant John Macready, who has gone over to the other side of the Atlantic, is the latest and most notable loss to the service. For the war-time aces and the holders of peace-time records are resigning from the air service in appalling numbers.

Of the six heroes of the round-the-world flight, only three remain in uniform. Within the past few months nearly a dozen famous flyers have quit. For the year 1925 the resignations in the air service amounted to 2.2 per cent, or nearly double the rate of 1.3 per cent in the infantry.

Each of these flyers who leaves represents a loss to the government, at actual replacement cost, of from \$100,000 to \$1,000,000.

Morale Shattered
Why are they leaving? The answer seems to be that morale has been sapped and hope destroyed by confusion in the service.

Some are dissatisfied over the Mitchell case, but discontent is more direct and personal. This answer comes not only from avowed critics of the administration but from the flyers themselves.

"If conditions were right, most of them would stay enthusiastically, regardless of low army pay and commercial opportunities outside," says Representative Frank R. Reid, who was attorney for Colonel William Mitchell at his court martial.

Representative F. H. LaGuardia, himself a flying major on the Italian front, agrees with him.

"Aviators are different from other men," he says. "They are different in nerves and temperament, and it is a mistake to try to force them into the same mold."



In flying they must keep track of three dimensions at once, while most of us have a hard time holding our heads in two. Yet the present system treats all officers alike. It is an impossible attempt.

Alexander M. Fisher, chief investigator for the Lampert committee, which a year ago made an exhaustive study of the air service, says:

"Slow promotion is one great

trouble. "The air service is on the same list with the artillery, the infantry, the quartermaster corps and all the other branches.

"The flyer must wait in line for his turn, and when a flyer is killed the vacancy he creates gives an advancement to all those of every branch behind him.

The flyer's life expectancy on an insurance rating is only 12 years. The average first lieutenant pilot will be dead before he gets to be a captain under the present system. The air service repeatedly has recommended a separate promotion list for its officers, but it gets nowhere.

\$100,000 Apiece
"Not only because of his risks but because of what he represents in personality, training and investment by the government, the air pilot has a right to feel entitled to consideration. It costs at least \$100,000 or more to train a pilot. This represents upkeep of fields and instruction staff, salary, wear on material and smashed-up planes.

"The stars in the service, Captain Lowell Smith of the world flight, for instance, easily represent an investment of more than \$1,000,000. It would take about

that much, in addition to time and risk, to train another to take his place.

"One of the Colonel Mitchell cases he was a good wartime soldier, but a poor one for peacetime. Yet what the army must have primarily is soldiers for wartime.

"There is, furthermore, a feeling that the organization is against the flyers. Non-flying officers control the policy of the air service. Legislation is academic, not practical. The flyers consider it hopeless. They believe the equipment is not as good as can be bought or built, and that the possibilities are not being half realized. They say they can be nothing but an auxiliary service. Therefore they lose interest."

Resigned
Crack flyers of the army air service, in addition to Colonel William Mitchell, who have resigned within the past few months, include:

Lieutenant John Macready, holder of the American altitude record.

Lieutenant H. R. Harris, one of the most expert test pilots in the world, and an authority on parachutes. He tried out the giant Barling bomber. Many of the army's world records were made by him.

Lieutenant George E. Hodge, an administrative expert, a notable flyer and former aide at the White House.

Lieutenant Parker Van Zandt, a pilot, a Ph. D. from the University of California, and an international expert on airplane design.

Lieutenant Frank W. Selfert, one of the army's best pilots, who took part in the re-fueling experiments on the west coast.

Lieutenant Charles N. Monteth, a technical expert with the engineering division at McCook Field.

Lieutenants Jack Harding, Jr., Leigh Wade and H. H. Ogden, flyers who made the world flight.

Going farther back into army records, conspicuous flyers who have been lost to the service include Major R. W. Schroeder, former holder of the altitude record; Major William G. Schauflier and Captain Ray Brooks, aces of war days, and Captain Belvin W. Maynard, the famous "flying parson" who resigned shortly before he was killed.

Lieutenant C. C. Moseley the first winner of the Pulitzer cup, is on a year's leave and expected to resign at its close. Other illustrious aviators are mentioned in reports of intended resignations.

EMBALMING OF OLD MUMMIES STUDIED

PITTSBURGH, Pa. (UP)—Modern science may disclose the secrets of ancient science when Douglas Stewart, director of the Carnegie Museum here, attempts to remove the coverings from an Egyptian mummy by using X-ray.

A tightly wrapped body of a baby, found in a tomb which had long been buried and on which another tomb had been built, was brought here by Stewart from Egypt.

The mummy was discovered by Prof. Edouard Naville at Abydos and dates back to the early days of the Ptolemaic period.

By taking X-ray pictures of the mummy, Stewart believes the secret of the ancients' burial and preservation of the body will be disclosed.

"With the X-ray examination we hope to ascertain the age of the child," Stewart told the

Sacramento Will Have World Fair

SACRAMENTO, Cal. (UP)—Even though it is more than 30 years away, the proposal to hold a world's fair in Sacramento is being revived to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the discovery of gold in meeting with a hearty response, those back of the movement report.

Douglas Thider, well known San Francisco sculptor, in a letter to the board of directors of the chamber of commerce said he is not only willing to live until 1949 but wants to be an exhibitor.

United Press. "By discovering the arrangement of the body in the wrappings, the period of its burial can be determined and possibly the secret of the Egyptians' method of burial.

The most powerful electrical arrangement obtainable has been assembled and work will start as soon as the equipment can be put in working order, Stewart said.

BELIEVE PRISONER IS RAVING MANIAC

Man Sentenced to Die in Idaho to be Examined For His Sanity

CARSON CITY, Nev., May 4. (UP)—Guadalupe Acosta, sentenced to die by lethal gas at Nevada state prison on May 31, and who believes himself immune to the fatal effects of the gas, is to be examined for his sanity. Attorney General DeWitt announced today he thought Acosta is insane and will have a sanity commission make an examination. If the prisoner is found to be mentally unbalanced he will not be put to death.

Ice Skating Now All Season Sport

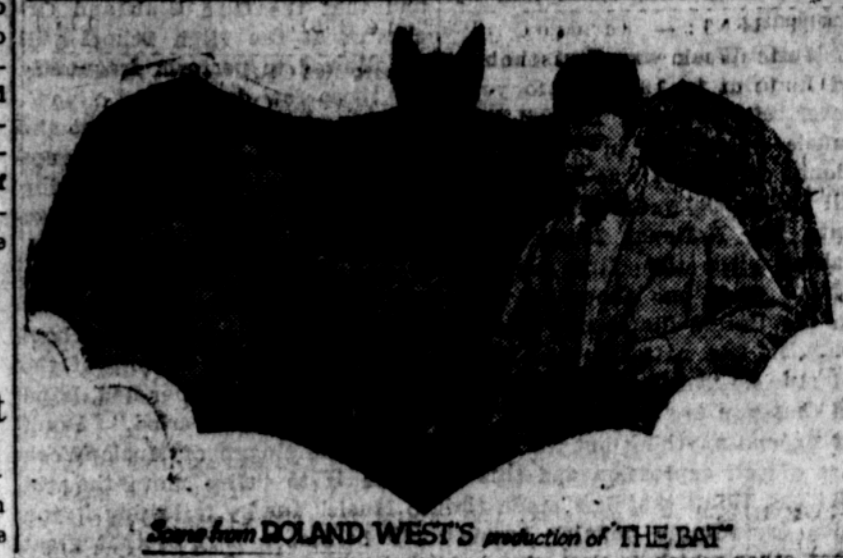
SAN FRANCISCO. (U. P.)—Encouraged by its success in other Pacific Coast cities, ice skating had returned to San Francisco as an all-season sport.

The big new ice pavilion, under construction for several months, was thrown open to the public the first of this month.

Ice hockey will not be inaugurated until fall. Plans are under way to bring a professional team to San Francisco, to compete, if arrangements can be made, in the league already existing in the Pacific Northwest, or in a new circuit to be formed to embrace

San Francisco has had no ice skating for many years. Enthusiasm over its revival is pronounced. Thousands of people have received skating boxes in the new pavilion.

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