

Virginia of the Air Lanes

A ROMANCE OF FLYING

By Herbert Quick

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—Theodore Carson, inventor of an airship, rescues from a fugitive flying machine called a helicopter, a beautiful young girl. II and III—Carson is infatuated by her and takes her where she can communicate with her friends. IV—Carson visits the Roe, a giant airship owned by Shayne, uncle of Virginia Suarez, the girl he rescued, and, being coldly received, leaps from the Roe, at a great height, in a parachute.

What under heaven had suddenly raised the expelled Craighead from his despoiled position in the institute to a thing to inspire terror and panic? Theodore could not imagine nor guess the reason for Craighead's sardonic laughter as he sat in their room drawing indictments against O'Grady and Witherpoon. He saw, however, that these were awesome documents, which set forth in a large, round hand that these gentlemen had been guilty of obtaining money under false pretenses, false imprisonment, malicious assault and the like, all done "feloniously, of malice prepense and aforethought, not having the fear of God before their eyes, but instigated thereto by the devil," and "against the peace and dignity of the state of Illinois and contrary to the statutes in such cases made and provided."

"Theodore, when we return," said Craighead, "this room will be full of corpses knocked stiff by these impeachments of O'Grady and Witherpoon. Take the spoils of the billion-aires. Hike—oh, hike—with me!" They crossed a dim field, followed a farm road and came back into the village from the opposite side. Craighead hurried Carson to a broad porch under tall elms and maples knobby with swelling buds. He pushed a button, and they waited.

At slow steps in the hall Craighead squeezed Carson's arm spasmodically. The door opened, and a low figure stood before them in which Theodore noted something familiar, and a voice not altogether strange, he thought, invited them into the "other room."

"Mr. Carson," said Mr. Craighead, "does not recognize in our host the erstwhile guide of my wandering and wobbly feet. Mr. Carson, in your new and fully established capacity as a respectable citizen let me present you to Mr. Waddy, to whose counsel, precept and example while acting as my attendant I feel myself indebted for my complete restoration to Philistinhood. Mr. Carson, Mr. Waddy!"

Mr. Waddy, ignoring this reintroduction, led them silently down the hall, past a door, which gave forth scuffling sounds, female voices and the peeping of young chickens, and took them into a snug den, the shelves of which were covered with books—tail, imposing, learned looking tomes in time darkened bindings—where they sat down in leather covered chairs gray with dust.

"So you did reely drop into the garden?" their host finally asked.

"Yes," answered Carson. "I think it was foolish to take the risk, but I did."

"Why?" queried Waddy, and Carson explained.

"Boy foolishness," said Mr. Waddy, and silence fell again, broken at last by Theodore's inquiry as to whether Mr. Waddy was active in eight banks and if he did not find his duties irksome.

Carson's heart sank. "Certainly not," replied Craighead, as if Mr. Waddy's refusal were the most natural thing in the world, "until you have ciphered the thing down to brass nails. And then— But tell Mr. Waddy about it, Mr. Carson. You need not enter into the offers of millions we have had and spurned. Just describe the machine."

Carson switched on the lights, and they gathered about the table.

CHAPTER VIII. MR. WADDY INVESTS.

THE young man talked slowly. Once in awhile Mr. Waddy interjected a question which evinced intelligent comprehension of the heart of Carson's explanation. Carson explained that his aeroplane differed from all others in having wings like a bird's, which did not flap, like those of the absurd orthoptera, and yet used half their surface in beating the air with a straight thrust like that of an orn in water.

"Don't yeh use screws?" asked Waddy.

"Not at all," answered Carson. "The screw can never be effective, because it strikes with a slant. It will do in water, but air requires a more effective thrust. When your propeller blade moves at a hundred miles an hour, say, you have a lift of thirty pounds to the square foot of surface with the direct stroke. But the surface of the screw—"

"Now, how d'ye figger that?" Carson repeated laboriously.

"Why," said Carson, "I can lift weights that none of the other airships can stir and fly off like an eagle with a fish."

The farmer-banker and the inventor were so absorbed that they scarcely noticed the entrance of a messenger from the institute with a message from Mr. O'Grady asking if Mr. Craighead would step outside for a moment nor Craighead's withdrawal and return.

"The direction of the blow of the propeller," said Carson, "is under perfect control. A bird's wing isn't. This is a better wing than an eagle's."

"Kin you raise right straight up," asked Waddy, "without running along like a buzzard?"

"I sure can," replied Carson, falling into dialect. "No bird can do that—no big bird. It's a better, stronger flier than any bird. The best any other machine can do is to support four pounds to the square foot of surface. With my new motors I can fly off with five times that, and I've got four times their bearing surface. I can carry mail and express at a profit or passengers that can afford it. I can hover over a ship with good heavy torpedoes and sink her and overtake any vessel that floats. I can—"

"What kind of motors you got?" interrupted Waddy.

Carson went into details. The old man looked through his eyebrows, whiskers and mustaches at Carson and the drawings.

"What if your engines stop," he asked, "when you're a mile high and over water mebbe?"

"I can soar," answered Carson. "I can make headway and gain height with no power if there's a wind, and I can stay up for hours with the propellers set for aeroplanes. But the best thing I haven't mentioned—the gyroscopic balancing device."

"What's that?" asked Mr. Waddy.

"Why, it's the successful application of the gyroscope to aviation."

"They used to talk about that," observed Mr. Waddy, "long ago—the Brennan single rail roads. I thought it turned out that the gyroscopes was too heavy fr air work."

"They are too heavy," cried Theodore, "if you use them to do the balancing. That's sure. And so we have had to balance by feeling, just as we do a bicycle. Thought isn't quick enough, so you have to rely on feeling, as a bird does. But I use little gyroscopes not to control by their weight and stress, but to distribute power to the wings and rudders—positive, automatic distribution of power. Why, if the engineer of my machine should fall dead it would fly on just as he set it until the fuel was exhausted. It feels and thinks."

They did not notice the opening of the door nor see the woman who entered.

(To Be Continued.)

OKLAHOMA CITIES FACE WATER FAMINE

GUTHRIE, Okla., Aug. 1.—Owing to the extended heat and drouth, cities of Western Oklahoma are facing a water famine. Oklahoma City, Guthrie, Enid and other large cities have been utterly forbidden the use of the city water, except for domestic purposes, while Stillwater, a college town, has been prohibited from using water except for drinking purposes.

Aside from the scarcity of water, the agricultural board says that the state crops will not be more than 25 per cent of normal. Hoppers, cinch-bugs and continued drouth have damaged the crops to such an extent that the farmers expect very little return.

The peach crop is said to be practically destroyed.

A good store location is advertising; good store service is advertising—but both of these are supplementary to the real advertising that is done in the newspaper.

\$100,000,000 IN APPLES ALONE

Product of Four Northwest States Will Soon Total Vast Amount in Fruit—Fast Becoming World's Fruit Basket.

CHICAGO, Ill., Aug. 1.—"While apples are not yet the principle product of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana, those who are familiar with the unrivalled climatic, soil and other conditions believe that the time is near when the apple yields of the four states will be worth \$100,000,000 and the culture of the king of fruit will be the chief industry."

H. L. Moody of Spokane, where he is a member of the chamber of commerce and other organizations, said this in an address on "Apple Culture and Irrigation in the Northwest" at the first meeting of the Chicago Irrigation Association in the La Salle hotel here the evening of July 28. Judge Charles F. Fishback was toastmaster. Mr. Moody added among other things:

Extent of Arable Land.—Federal and state engineers say reports to their respective departments there are approximately 200,000,000 acres of undeveloped arable lands in the United States west of the ninety-eighth meridian, and men versed in agriculture assert that under proper cultivation this area could be made to produce between 4,000,000,000 and 4,500,000,000 bushels of wheat yearly, or other crops in proportion. The settlement of these lands would mean homes for not less than 20,000,000 population and a

source of added food supply, and, as a consequence, permanent prosperity.

The four northwestern states contain 253,894,760 acres, as follows: Montana, 93,806,080; Oregon, 61,887,360; Idaho, 53,960,320; Washington, 44,241,000. Less than 5 per cent of this land is occupied by farms and the total population is not more than 3,000,000 in an area of 397,700 square miles. More than 50,000 acres of this land is adapted to irrigation. Planted to apples and properly watered the minimum crop at maturity would be a matter of 20,000,000,000 bushels, or about 40 per cent of the total crop of the United States in 1909, when less than 22,000,000 barrels of apples were harvested.

No Overproduction in Sight.—"Regarding possible over-production in the Northwest, I may say that the demand is growing greater every day, not only throughout America, but in Europe, Australia and the Orient. Although population and the domestic demand for these fruits has increased and exports continually augmented, strangely enough, the production of the apple has steadily decreased. The apple crop for 1909, reported to be less than 23,000,000 barrels, for example, was only slightly in excess of one-third of that for the years 1896 and 1900, and much less than the crop for 1905, when the production reached a low figure. The fact that the production in the United States has averaged below 30,000,000 barrels in four of the last five years alone should dispel any thought of over-production."

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- 43-acre alfalfa ranch, 1 mile out, new 8-room house, large barn, three good wells; price \$21,500, half cash; will pay 8 per cent on investment.
- 20 acres alfalfa land, fine land, no buildings; price \$7500, \$2000 cash.
- 36 acres, 1 mile out, 6 acres in 2-year-old apples, balance in pears 1 year old; new 5-room house and large barn, good well and outbuildings; price \$12,600, half cash; a good buy.
- 31 acres, 1 mile out, 27 acres set to apples and pears 1 year old; 7-room house, barn and outbuildings, 2 good wells; fine building site; price \$15,000, half cash.
- 20 acres, 1 mile out, 16 acres in trees 1 year old; no buildings; good well; price \$7000, \$2500 cash.
- 14 acres, 1 mile out, 10 acres in trees, balance in alfalfa; price \$4200, \$2500 cash.
- 6 acres, 1 mile out, set to trees, fine building site, good irrigation well; price \$2400, \$1600 cash.
- 20 acres, half mile out, set to pears 1 and 2 years old; price \$10,000, half cash.
- 2 acres in town, small house, good well, a fine garden tract; price \$1300.

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