

Virginia of the Air Lanes

A ROMANCE OF FLYING

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 Roc, a giant airship owned by Shayne, uncle of Virginia Suarez, the girl he rescued, and, being coldly received, leaps from the Roc, at a great height, in a parachute.

V, VI and VII—He lands in the grounds of the Slatery Institute for Inebriates, where he makes a friend of one Craighead, who plans to raise capital to manufacture the new style airship Carson has invented. Thus they hope to rival Shayne, who controls the airship industry.

VIII—Mr. Waddy decides conditionally to capitalize the Carson-Craighead project.

IX—Carson goes to Florida to complete a sample airship to exhibit to Mr. Waddy, and he finds Virginia here.

X—He is in love with Virginia. Wizer, a rival inventor, conspires to kill Carson.

XI, XII, XIII and XIV—Wizer with a submarine in a sensational manner almost accomplishes the death of Carson and Virginia and the destruction of the airship, a case of "devilfish versus bird." Virginia flees from Carson in the Roc.

In the little locker were found the elements from which Craighead prepared the luncheon of bacon, eggs and coffee, cooked on the methanose stove. "We shall get into the upper Atlantic regions," said Carson, "just in time to hit the area of local storms to-night."

He looked from the tiller to the compass and hesitated about leaving it to eat. He had never tried letting the Virginia follow her nose with the tiller lashed.

"Of course," said he, "she'll fall off. But if she turns I can put her back on her course. I believe I'll try her." Whereupon Craighead recited a poem:

"I go away this blessed day
To sail across the state, Matilda.
My airship starts for various parts
At twenty after eight, Matilda.
I do not know where we may go
Or whether near or far, Matilda.
For Captain Carson don't make a parson
Of any foremost tar, Matilda.
That mystic man beneath my ban
Shall suffer, count qu'il couste, Matilda.
What right has he to keep from me
The airy, scary route, Matilda?
Although, in sooth, I am a youth
Of common sailor lot, Matilda.
Am I a man on human plan
Devised, or am I not, Matilda?"

"And echo, if there were any place to echo from, would answer, 'Not Matilda.' Have some of the milk while the Virginia chases her tail above Mr. Pincho's forest."

"She doesn't chase her tail much," replied Carson, "so far, at least."

She did not. The gyroscopes held her on an even keel, and the altimeter statoroscope delivered the verdict that the Virginia was following a course as level as a battleship's. Carson ate, watched the triumphant test and forgot to frown, and he little knew toward what danger he was hurling himself.

Peak after peak, village after village and occasionally a big smokeless town about the national power plants of the Leighton reservoirs came hurrying toward them, passed beneath like visions and fell behind.

"See that big stratus cloud?" asked Carson. "Shall we go over or under it?"

"Personally," replied Craighead, "I've been under a cloud long enough."

The stratus was an immense vapor sheet half a mile above the earth. Underneath were the gloom and dullness of cloudy weather, but above it the sun shone with a brightness augmented by the brilliancy reflected from the upper surface of the cloud as from a great glittering plain of snow. The sun was past the meridian and shining warm, but on the wing over that great expanse of pearl the air felt, not cold, but "caller," and they put on their topcoats. The shadow of the Virginia ran with her across the cloud like a black bat haloed in the unspeakable glory of a triple rainbow which ringed the scudding shadow about in concentric circles, so bright, so resplendent in dye, so glorious in their mingling lines, that the voyagers, glancing from radiance to radiance, levered their voices to the thrill of a beauty too intense for speech.

The immense engines were moving more regularly than clockwork, keeping the pledge of their makers that if supplied with fuel and oil they would run without a single stop until worn out—the perfection of the internal combustion engine, once so untrusting.

"I want to see where we are," finally said Carson. "This is like an orange

ocean. I want to compare the map with the landscape."

Obedient to the tilted rudders, the Virginia pointed her prow downward. Her propeller blades buried her swiftly forward and toward the earth, and she plunged into the cold stream of the stratus cloud into mist and white scarfs of icy fog and the snowy obscurity of an aerial blizzard. Craighead gasped at the chill and the blindness.

"Ring for a guide," said he. "I'm lost."

He was not lost for long, for the Virginia clove the fleecy hoodwink and emerged through its lower levels into the clear shadows of the nether air. They could feel the warmth radiated from the ground, balmy with earthy scents. Far to the northeast lay a shining river, widening at the limit of vision into a broad estuary, and just within sight could be discerned the clustered spires and towers of a city. Carson looked the landscape over and studied his map.

"Craighead," cried Carson, "we've made Richmond three hours quicker than I thought it possible. A stork or a Canada goose couldn't have covered the distance, and both sometimes go 200 miles an hour! Why?"

"Let us exult over you insufferable plutes!" cried Craighead. "Let's fly rings around 'em! Let's sail circles around the snobs!"

Craighead, scanning the southeast with his fieldglasses, had discovered at a distance of six or seven miles a huge silver aeronat steering northward. Theodore threw over the tiller and made for the airship. Craighead looked at him in wonder.

"That ship looks," said Carson, advancing the spark and crowding the engines, "like the Roc."

After a few moments on a straight course to intersect that of the aeronat Carson threw the Virginia up into the cloud. Soon they emerged on the shining upper levels of the cloud, which hid their approach to the other craft. One below the curtain and one above it, the airship of the future and the airship of the past flew on converging courses. They dropped below the cloud into the thinner vapor. They looked about—and saw nothing. And yet, above the purring of the machinery, came to their ears the tremor from powerful engines. Could the Condor have ascended into the cloud as they descended from it? Voices came closer and closer.

"My God, Carson!" shouted Craighead. "You're going foul of her! Look down!"

Just in time Carson looked. From the depths of air below the great bubble of silver rose, swelling in her swift approach. A collision meant ruin. The propelling blades of the aeronat would cut the envelope of the gas holder like paper, and the two ships in a huge mass of tangled wreckage would fall to the earth in death and ruin, or the escaping gas from the aeronat, ignited from the exhaust of the Virginia's engines, might explode, hurling the fragments of both vessels far and wide. And Carson saw in the ruin the fair form of Virginia Suarez hurled to earth from the Roc and crushed to formlessness below.

Quick as lightning Carson threw on full speed forward. The Virginia obeyed her machinery, and as she swooped to the aeronat's starboard the latter rose swiftly. The Virginia's stern rudder grazed the gas bag and was all but carried away; a cord of the suspension system of the airship snapped with a detonation that set the huge fabric in a tremble. There rose a cry from the deck of the hitherto unconscious monster as her people realized the fearful fact that here in these dizzy heights they were in collision with something.

A man came running out of the cabin with a gun in his hand, as if with some wild notion of giving battle to the destroyer.

The Virginia was half a mile from the airship before the crew of the latter had time to assure themselves of her safety. The Virginia went astern as well as athwart the course of the other craft, and as she sheered to starboard the aeronat and the aeronat sped from each other at the sum of their two speeds, perhaps four miles a minute. The people on the latter must have thought the other gone forever when an astounding thing happened. The aeronat wheeled about and gave chase—nay, she gave chase so swiftly that she swelled visibly in her swift overhauling of the aeronat. In a time so short that it seemed like a breath the Virginia, on a level now with the other's deck, came in close astern, then sheered off and deliberately ran around the big Condor as she stood on her course at full speed. As she crossed the bows a cry went out from the great ship's engine room—a cry of mingled fear and astonishment. Why did this new craft so course about them? It was some new engine of aviation—that was sure. And with such incredible speed and such unheard-of mobility!

So as Carson came up on his second circumnavigation of the Condor there stood at the rail of the big airship two or three men with guns, who made threatening gestures and shouted to him to stand off or they would shoot.

"What ship is that?" cried Carson.

"None of your business! You stand off or we'll shoot!"

"Shoot if you dare!" cried Carson.

"Don't you see that I can go above where you can shoot and rip your gas bag in perfect safety? Come, now, answer my question."

"This is the Daedalus of Spokane," was the reply. "What devilish thing is that?"

"The Virginia—of Carson's Land- ing, in Alabama," replied Theodore.

"Whose aeronat is that?" asked the man who seemed in command.

"It's mine," said Theodore. "I built her."

(To Be Continued.)

FLANDERS CAR AT NATATORIUM

Too Large to Go Through Entrance at Kentner's, So Another Place Had to Be Found for It—Can See It at the "Nat."

The Flanders car to be disposed of by the Crater Lake Highway commission, and which was to have been placed on display at Kentner's today was too large to be taken through the entrance at Kentner's and so was taken to the Natatorium where it may be seen.

WOMAN, 89, IS SWIMMER; ASTONISHES THE BATHERS

BOSTON, Mass., Aug. 22.—Old Orchard boasts of the oldest summer girl in the world in Mrs. Patrick H. Burns of Dover, N. H., aged 89. Mrs. Burns is an all-round athlete of wonderful ability for her age and has never allowed a summer to pass since 1846 without a few weeks of sea bathing. She is a good swimmer and undoubtedly the only woman of her age that indulges actively in the pastime. Mrs. Burns while swimming breasts the big waves for from five to ten minutes and then springs out as spry as a boarding school undergraduate to hurry to her room in the Dorr House and prepare herself for luncheon.

\$750,000 PASSENGER STATION AT SALT LAKE

SALT LAKE CITY, Aug. 22.—Today and hereafter arriving and departing passengers on the Rio Grande Western will derive their first and last impressions of the city from a \$750,000 union station. The building has been under construction for two years. It is 417 feet long and 98 feet wide. The entrances face on Second South, Third South and Fourth West streets. The waiting-room is 144 feet long and 83 feet wide. Railroad officials occupy the second story. Architecturally, the building is even more imposing than the cost would indicate.

OLD TANK SOON TO COME DOWN

Councilman Wortman Secures Contractors without Difficulty—City to Retain Tanks and Iron and Pay \$50 for the Job.

At last the old water tower is to be torn down and done away with. Councilman Wortman has secured the contractors and has let the job. Work will start at once.

According to Mr. Wortman it pays to advertise. The Mail-Tribune stated that the council had put the job up to Mr. Wortman and immediately he was besieged with offers. By the terms of the contract the men will tear the tower down, and get the material and \$50. The city will retain the tanks and iron.

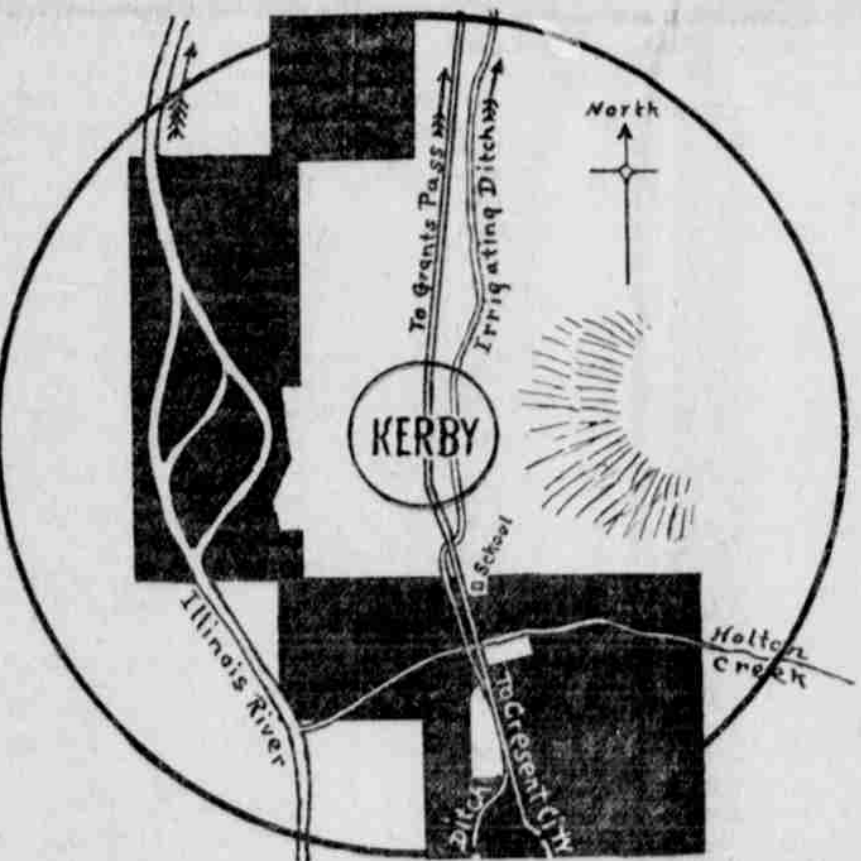
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CRATER LAKE TRANSPORTATION CO.

J. C. NEFF, Manager.

Medford Address: Nash Hotel.

YACHTSMEN STARTLED BY GERMAN SHAM INVASION

BERLIN, Aug. 22.—Rumors of the invasion of England by Germany would be surely revived were it generally known what a party of British yachtsmen witnessed while on a recent tour of German waters.

The Britishers were sailing between the Frisian islands and the German mainland when they suddenly came across hundreds of barges laden with German troops being towed from the coast to the islands. Watching the operations from a distance, the yachtsmen witnessed a full-dress rehearsal of the landing of an invading army, with all the necessary paraphernalia of horses, gun carriages and supplies.

When the Britishers afterward questioned the German officers they made no secret of the fact that they were engaged on a sham invasion, adding that such maneuvers formed one of the most important parts of their military curriculum. The Britishers departed more thoughtful men.

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\$5,000,000 IS MISSING FROM PARIS FLOOD FUNDS

PARIS, Aug. 22.—Another scandal even more serious than the Rochette affair, is looming in France.

A group of deputies, with M. Maurice Barres at their head, has been endeavoring, without success, to obtain details of money received for distribution among the unfortunate people who were more or less ruined by the floods in Paris last January.

Hundreds of applications for help still remain unsatisfied six months after the catastrophe, and the committee declares itself unable or un-

willing to make any financial statement. An immense sum of money has to be accounted for. The French Parliament voted \$4,000,000. In addition to this, a much larger sum has been received from private subscriptions all over France, from public institutions and from abroad.

Wears Hobbie Skirt; Is Hurt.
NEW YORK, Aug. 22.—Wearing her first hobbie skirt, Miss Lillian Shuttleworth, 23 years old, of New Rochelle, tried to run down a steep incline at Glen Island and sustained a fracture of her left leg when she tripped and fell.

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