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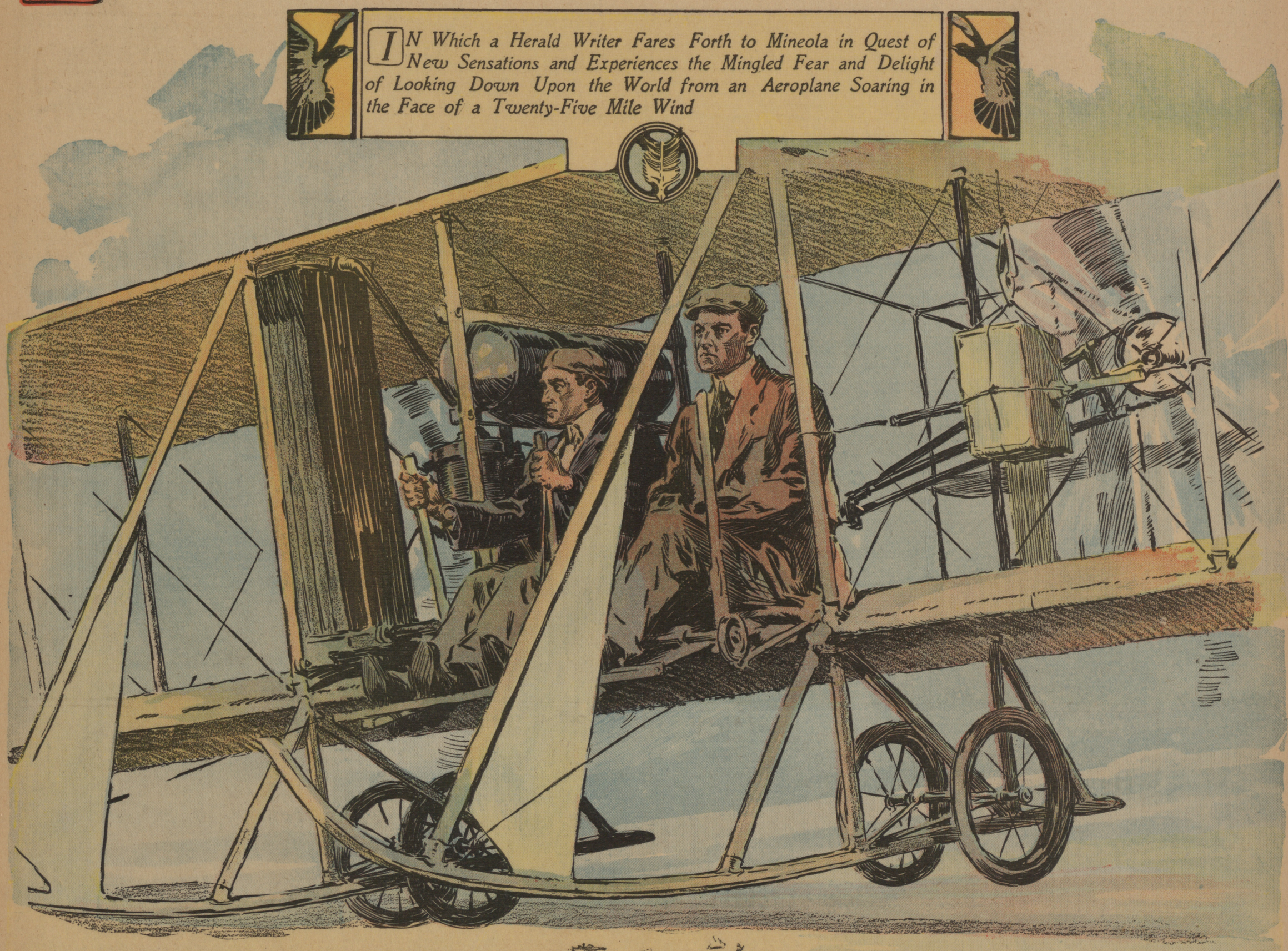
A NOVICE'S FLIGHT WITH A MAN-BIRD

IN Which a Herald Writer Fares Forth to Mineola in Quest of New Sensations and Experiences the Mingled Fear and Delight of Looking Down Upon the World from an Aeroplane Soaring in the Face of a Twenty-Five Mile Wind



The Houses and Trees Were Like Little Model Things

BY GARNET WARREN.

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"TWO streets along and turn to your left," said the gentleman that shined shoes at the Mineola station when I asked where a stray aviator or so might be found. He spoke with a certain spacious familiarity, for Mineola is used to aviators these days.

And so it was that I came to the Aviators' Inn, 'round the corner, a white story and a half building, with little story and a half Jersey windows. There was a steady eyed gentleman in shirt sleeves sitting on the plazza; a short but what one might term hefty looking young lady rested on a table. There was a thick freckled young man with brilliant hair and check trousers. Another gentleman possessed a stick and a broken ankle—the trophies of his first attempts to navigate a corner.

All looked aeroplany, though it was the conversation which told me I had really arrived. For conversation to the aeroplanist is what blossoms are to spring or complimentary tickets to amateur recitalists. Beside the aviator fan the baseball fan is a frail object. His talk turns to the seductiveness of carburetors, the enticing delights of motors.

When I arrived one gentleman was remarking that somebody didn't know a spark plug from a generator. Another one was explaining spiritedly that the monoplane was the only type, and that he liked to have all the weight in front of him. The original woman aviator was understood to exhibit the keenest apprehension as to the weather, at which she cocked a versed aeronautic eye, which is the nearest thing to the old seaman's eye that can be described.

Mr. Shriver, long and lean, who possesses the record of a flight by night, laughed long and loud at a chance remark.

"Cap'n Baldwin," he began to the quiet man.

Captain Baldwin! Are there any of us whose hair gives indication of treachery either as to color or to space—we, who, being human, search the glass for the shocking missals of our recorded joys—who do not feel some thrill within the dying youth of us at the name of Captain Baldwin? Perhaps you saw him, a flashing, almost too splendid figure, from a trapeze. Mother possibly had just given you a chocolate and told you it was to be the last. Perhaps he was your hero when you saw him leap down through space into his net below, there to bow with all the graces which might obtain to the associated inhabitants of Olympus. Perhaps he struck your sight a speck in the background of infinite blue, grasping his parachute and descending like a god. In confidence, I did myself, but that was twenty years ago, and why drag in the skeleton at the feast?

Captain Baldwin! I walked with him at the edge of the cornfield, toward the low red shed, the low galvanized red sheds and the striped tent, from whose delicious neighborhood sounded some droning whirr which might have been that of a giant hive, and he told me in appropriate punctuate pauses as to the present status of learning to fly.

It appeared that there were three schools—the Wright school, the Moisant school and the Baldwin school—each of which, you may be sure, had its own particular theory of learning, though the captain was scrupulously fair to all. He was an honest trader—only in the cooler air.

The Wright method is first to take the pupil as passenger, to "get the feel of the air."

On the next journey he takes in hand a lever, representing one "control," which is either a switch down or up, or to left or to right; but I simply can't help being technical. The conductor, a duplicate lever in hand, sits ready to correct any slight inaccuracy which the pupil may make; and personally I can't blame him. Next day the pupil takes another control and then another. One day he takes 'em all. Then he's an aviator. It all sounds very simple.

The Moisant school has different theories. With it the initial process is to "cut grass," if one may once more revel in the realm of the technical. By this process the pupil races his aeroplane like some glorified tricycle over the humble ground. Then his right and left controls are learned, from which he graduates to the No. 2 machine. This rises conservatively, as Wall street might put it—only a few feet, in fact. Then comes the No. 3 machine, in which all controls are learned. Then the majesty of the No. 4, in which you mount to the clouds. Of course you may break your neck, but you've been thoroughly taught, and you would be an aviator, you know.

Captain Baldwin's method is more personal. He believes that the best fashion of learning to fly is to fly. His unequalled experience in matters of the air puts him in a position to very delicately gauge the

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