

Aviator's Nerve Cheats Death In Grim Sky Drama

**Gear Disabled, Dixon
Works Two Hours in
Upside Down Position,
Repairs and Lands**

**Balks Crash Fate
By Pluck And Wit**

**Rope, Shoestring and Belt
Makeshift Saves Four
After Nerve-Wracking
Flight Over Hartford**

BY THEODORE E. BUELL.

A piece of rope, a shoe-string and a leather belt pressed into service 1000 feet over Hartford Friday, by Lieutenant Carl A. Dixon saved him and three passengers in his airplane from probable injury and possible death, when the landing gear became disabled as the result of the crystallization of a bolt. Dixon was piloting a New Standard five-passenger, open cockpit plane, equipped with a 220-horsepower Wright Whirlwind motor.

Handing the control stick to his mechanic, Dixon, who is a member of the 43d Division Aviation, C. N. G., and operations manager of the L & H Aircraft Company, cut a hole through the side of the plane's fuselage and made necessary repairs while hanging by his feet. As the plane was soaring over the city, several other ships took off from Brainard Field to offer any possible assistance to the flyers.

Sergeant Clyde B. Kincaid, connected with the L & H Aircraft Company, going up in another plane, carried parachutes with him which he offered to drop to the disabled machine, but Dixon spurned the suggestion that he and his mates take to safety by that means, which would mean demolition of their plane.

Finally, trusting to the strength of the improvised repairs, Dixon again took control of the ship after two hours of tedious work while in a position almost upside down, and glided the plane to the ground in one of the slowest landings ever attempted at Brainard Field. Witnesses estimated that the plane was not traveling more than 25 miles an hour as it swept safely to earth.

In the plane with Dixon were David Weingart, his mechanic; Joseph Baltrun, a pilot of Northampton, Mass., and John Anderson, an L & H Company employee. The quartet took off from Brainard Field shortly before 4 o'clock to attend an air meet at Willimantic. As they swung over the field there, preparatory to making a landing, attaches of the field ran into the landing space, frantically faving their hands at the Hartford plane.

Hangs From Plane By Feet.

When Dixon saw that the right V-strut was hanging beneath the fuselage and that the upright was flopping limply at the side of the plane, he ascended to a height of 1000 feet and turned the nose of the plane in the direction of Hartford. The pilot then turned over the controls to Mechanic Weingart and, stripping himself to the waist, cut a hole in the side of the fuselage and crawled out to make temporary repairs, hanging by his feet.

It was first necessary to raise the V-strut to its normal position, extending out to the right of the fuselage. Dixon did this by tossing his

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Death Cheated By Nerve Of Aviator

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belt around the strut and pulling with all his strength, the strong wind from the propeller seriously handicapping him. A shoe-string was employed to replace the bolt which had crystallized, causing it to break. A rope, several feet long, was placed

charge from the British forces, he returned to his home in New Britain, and when the 118th Observation Squadron, 43rd division, O. N. G., was organized Dixon joined. He became associated with the L & H Aircraft Company in January, 1928.



LIEUTENANT CARL A. DIXON.

about the V-strut at its apex, the other end being drawn tight and fastened inside the open cock-pit, holding the strut and wheel in place. The flyers estimated that this routine was gone through at least a score of times before it was at last firmly secured. Meanwhile, Mechanic Weingart was flying the plane over the city, keeping the crippled craft at an altitude varying from 500 to 1000 feet.

Slight Damage Done.

The repairs served their purpose—they held as the ship at last came to earth, and damage estimated by Dixon at not more than \$20 was done. Three ribs of the right wing were broken; the bolt must be replaced and the tear in the side of the fuselage must be replaced. These repairs, it was estimated at the hangar Friday night, would be completed by this noon.

Dixon was the only occupant of the plane who was at all hurt, and his injuries were slight. Contact with sharp wires as his body scraped against them left a dozen severe scratches on Dixon's right side.

Dixon Praised By Flyers.

Fellow aviators at Brainerd Field were profuse in their praise of Dixon as he stood by the ship Friday night, supervising the minor repairs. Several said that they would have taken to parachutes, or landed the plane in the water, but these means of escaping were scoffed at by the pilot, who was reluctant to discuss the thrilling experience.

After the plane had landed safely, the flyers refused to admit fright over their dangerous ride. Mr. Baltzini said that he was not worried over the ability of Dixon to make sufficient repairs, but that as the time wore on he grew worried as to what would happen in case the plane ran out of gas.

"We had enough gas left to run four more hours," said Mechanic Weingart, interrupting for a moment.

"So I found out after we'd landed, but I wish you had told me that while we were up in the air, Dave. Every time the motor quieted down a bit I looked to see if the propeller was stopping."

Dixon said that he was under a more serious handicap than was Colonel Lindbergh, who recently had a similar mishap occur on his plane. In Lindbergh's case the wheel entirely fell off, and it was possible to make a forced landing with one wheel, Dixon explained, adding that even with that much in his favor, Lindbergh's ship was "cracked up" and Lindbergh was slightly injured.

First Flew At 20.

Dixon is a veteran flyer, having enlisted in the Canadian Royal Flying Corps in 1917, being at that time only 20 years old and the youngest member of the 58th squadron. While still in British service, Dixon was the first pilot to successfully negotiate the aerial trip from London to Cairo, late in 1919. Upon his honorable dis-

Lieutenant Dixon, Hero Of Air Feat, On Another Trip

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Lieutenant Dixon, Hero Of Air Feat, On Another Trip

Aviator Who Repaired Landing Gear in Mid-Air Again Takes Off

Lieutenant Carl Dixon of the L & H Aircraft Company, who saved himself and three passengers he was flying in a New Standard from probable serious injury Friday, when he repaired a broken landing gear with the ship in flight 1000 feet above the city, flew the company's Fairchild to Paterson, N. J., Saturday to obtain a new shock-absorber strut for the damaged plane.

Dixon was accompanied on the flight to Paterson, the factory base of the manufacturers of the New Standard plane, by Joseph Baltrum of Northampton, who was also a passenger in the New Standard Friday, during the exciting period when the landing gear was being repaired in the air. Baltrum, a pilot himself, was to take delivery on a New Stan-

dard at the factory and fly it to his Northampton base for commercial service.

The New Standard, which suffered minor damages Friday when it landed with the auxiliary repairs, was being reconditioned at the L & H hangar Saturday. According to the company mechanics, the ship will in all probability be ready for service on the line today in the event that Lieutenant Dixon returns with the necessary strut.

Dixon, who plans an attempt to set a new solo endurance mark in the New Standard, inspected the progress on the construction of the extra fuel tanks he ordered to be installed in the ship for the flight. It is expected that all details will be completed sometime next week so that the attempt, primarily scheduled for last week, may be made soon.

Dixon Enters Air Marathon At Syracuse

Hartford Pilot to Substitute For Injured Flyer in Refueling Endurance Record Attempt

Lieutenant Carl A. Dixon, Brainerd Field pilot, flying with Clyde Pangborne of Paterson, N. J., will take off from Syracuse, N. Y., Monday morning in an attempt to better the 420 hour world's refueling endurance record set by the St. Louis Robin last month. New York will bid for the world record with the "Empire State," a specially equipped New Standard biplane, powered with a Wright Whirlwind motor.

Lieutenant Dixon, upon landing at Brainerd Field Monday evening around 8 o'clock after a flight from Teterboro, N. J., announced that he had concluded arrangements to make the flight and signed the contract in New Jersey that afternoon. Operations manager of the L & H Aircraft Corporation, local branch of the Colonial Flying Service, Dixon will be given a leave of absence for the duration of the endurance flight.

Substitutes for McKinney.

Lieutenant Dixon, who was to fly the refueling ship for the record breaking attempt, is to take the place of Ike McKinney as pilot of the endurance plane. McKinney was injured Sunday at the Teterboro, N. J., airport, when the ship he was test flying spun in from a 1400 foot altitude. The refueling plane, a second New Standard, will be flown by Simon Bittner of Syracuse, N. Y.

Clyde Pangborne, chief test pilot

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Dixon Entrant In Air Marathon

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for the New Standard Aircraft Corporation, is well known to local pilots, his last visit to Brainard Field having been last month when he flew here to deliver a New Standard to "Frenchy" Descombe. McKinney, injured in the crack-up Sunday, was also known in Hartford.

The official record of the St. Louis Robin, 420 hours and 31 minutes, set by Dale Jackson and Forest O'Brine, when they landed their plane at the



LIEUT. CARL A. DIXON.

St. Louis airport July 30 after 17 and a half days in the air, will be the mark Dixon and Pangborne will attempt to better.

Lieutenant Dixon plans to leave Hartford Wednesday to complete final arrangements at the New Standard factory in Paterson before flying to Syracuse for the take off Monday.

Repaired Plane in Mid-air.

The Brainard Field pilot will be remembered as having repaired the landing gear of his ship a few weeks ago, while the plane was in flight over the city. Dixon, using a piece of rope, a leather belt and a shoestring succeeded in repairing the undercarriage with the improvised tools while he hung by his feet under the fuselage of the ship.

A veteran of the British Royal Flying Corps, the local pilot has been flying since 1918 when he was sent to France for active duty. At that time he was but 20 years old, the youngest pilot in the Fifty-eighth Squadron. He was the first flyer to negotiate a flight from London to Cairo, completing the trip late in 1919 while still in the British service. Upon his honorable discharge from the British air unit, he returned to his home in New Britain. At the organization of the 118th Observation Squadron Dixon joined, and was promoted to the rank of a first Lieutenant a short time later. Dixon became associated with the L & H Aircraft Corporation in January, 1928.

SYRACUSE FLIERS STILL UP.

Empire State Standard Begins First Night Aloft in Endurance Test.

SYRACUSE, N. Y., Aug. 26 (AP).—The Empire State Standard, which took off from the enclosure of the New York State Fair Grounds here today in an effort to break the endurance record of more than 120 hours, set by the St. Louis Robin, began its first night aloft tonight.

Early tonight the Empire State Standard had been aloft about nine hours, and favorable reports were received from Clyde E. Pangborn and Carl A. Dixon, the pilots.

The Empire State Standard left the fair ground at 11:03:37 A. M. Two refueling contacts were made, one shortly after noon and the other at night.

The weather forecast for tomorrow predicted showers.

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'Empire State' Aloft After 57th Hour

Dixon and Pangborn Bear- ing Up Well Under Strain of Syracuse En- durance Flight

Syracuse, Aug. 28.—(Special)—With 57 hours to their credit at 7 o'clock tonight, Clyde E. Pangborn and Carl A. Dixon, pilots of the "Empire State" standard, endurance plane at the State Fair, signified that they "may" come down in October. In notes dropped late this afternoon.

One hundred and twenty gallons of gasoline and two gallons of oil went aloft in the "Uneedas" refueling plane, piloted by Cy Bittner and Hugh Herndon, Jr., at 6:30 o'clock tonight. The contact was perfect and the supplies will carry the plane through another night's ceaseless droning over and about Syracuse, the route the flyers have maintained since they went aloft at 11:04 o'clock Monday morning.

All Depends on Motor.

At 5:05 o'clock this morning Pangborn refused fuel and food when the "Uneedas" went aloft, signalling that Dixon was sleeping. Both men have now become used to the "upper berth" as they call their plane. In notes dropped and can sleep without any trouble.

The men's food is agreeing with them as they are eating only pure wholesome food. Pangborn's being prepared personally by his wife of a few weeks. From this time on, experts say, the duration of the flight is up to the motor, a 320-horsepower Wright Whirlwind. This type of engine is noted for its longevity.

Steak, corn on the cob, potatoes, milk and coffee, strawberries and cream, was taken aloft for the pilots' dinner tonight. Weather predictions are for a clear night and continue Thursday.

Pilot Dixon Passes 100th Hour In Air In Endurance Hop

Engine and Flyers in Good Condition — Fair Open Until Finish

Syracuse, Aug. 30.—(Special.)—The "Empire State Standard," endurance plane piloted by Clyde Pangborn and Carl Dixon, coasted into its 100th hour in the air at 3:04 o'clock this afternoon and was still going strong on the 103rd hour at 8:04 o'clock tonight. The engine is functioning perfectly and the flyers declare they can stay in the air indefinitely. Weather predictions for tonight and early tomorrow are favorable.

The State Fair closes tomorrow but announcement was made today that concessions will remain open and spectators will pay the regular admission price to see the "Uneedas," refueling plane, take off and establish contact with the "Standard." The "Uneedas" was taken to Amboy Airport today because a stiff east wind was blowing making it necessary to take off from the fair grounds the short way and officials regarded this as hazardous. It will return to the fair grounds as soon as the wind shifts.

The National Aeronautic Association stated today that when the barograph now in the "Standard" runs down it will not be necessary to install another. Jack Haffner, an official of the association, has been at the field all during the flight. A daredevil announced today he will allow himself be let down by a rope from the refuel plane to the "Standard," visit the pilots and then jump from the wing of the plane in a parachute. Ground men think Pangborn and Dixon may veto that idea.

The last contact tonight was at 6:30 o'clock for 120 gallons of gas and supper.

Dixon Gives Up Position With L & H

Well-Known Brainard Field Pilot to Become Sales Manager For New Jersey Company

Lieutenant Carl A. Dixon, former officer in the British Royal Flying Corps, widely known Brainard Field pilot and for the past year operations manager of the L & H Aircraft Company, has resigned from his position with the L & H to become general sales manager for the New Standard Aircraft Corporation of Paterson, N. J. He will have charge of sales in the entire country.

Lieutenant Dixon will leave Hartford today or Sunday for Paterson, headquarters of the New Standard, and will take off from the New Jersey city Tuesday for Los Angeles, base of his operations for the next four months. His wife and mother will leave for California by train today.

At Camp Perry, Ohio, Lieutenant Dixon will meet Clyde Pangborne, chief test pilot for the New Standard Company and Dixon's companion on a recent attempt to set a refueling endurance record at Syracuse. Pangborne will accompany the Hartford man on his flight to the coast. With Lieutenant Dixon also will be John Hadigan of New Britain, former pilot for the Wallingford Air Transport, who is going as a passenger. Lieutenant Dixon will fly a New Standard transport plane and Pangborne a New Standard training ship.

Born in New Haven.

Lieutenant Dixon was born in New Haven September 17, 1899, the son of John and Polly Ashton Dixon. His family moved to New Britain when he was six years old and he was educated in the public schools there. He was graduated from the New Britain High School June 9, 1916, with honors.

For a time he was in the employ of the Stanley Rule & Level Company in New Britain, working in the invoice department and preparing at the same time to enter Yale University in the fall of 1917.

The war, however, made a difference. An attempt to enlist in the United States Army failed because he was underweight, but in New York City he had more success. There he met an officer of the Canadian recruiting service and enlisted in the Canadian Royal Flying Corps. That was in October, 1917. He was called November 19 and left immediately for Toronto where he entered the aeronautical school at Trinity College. He received his second lieutenant's commission March 3, 1918, less than four months later.

Lieutenant Dixon was then sent to France, where he was transferred to the British Royal Flying Corps and advanced to first lieutenant June 1, 1918. At that time, at the age of 20, he was the youngest member of the Fifty-Eighth Squadron.

Holds Egypt Record.

While still in the British service he was the first pilot to negotiate successfully the air trip from London to Egypt, flying from the English capital to Cairo late in 1919 and the early part of 1920. From Cairo he went to Basra, India, where he stayed until the fall of 1921.

After honorable discharge from the flying corps Lieutenant Dixon returned to New Britain and again entered the employ of the Stanley Rule &

& Level Company. He was sent to the export department in New York City, but returned in the spring of 1922 to New Britain. When the 118th Observation Squadron, Connecticut National Guard, was organized, Lieutenant Dixon enlisted and was commissioned a second lieutenant, to be promoted to first lieutenant a short time later.

In July, 1927, he resigned from the squadron to fly commercially in Toledo, Ohio, but reentered the National Guard unit when he returned to Hartford in January, 1928, to take a position as chief pilot for the L & H Aircraft Company. He was made assistant secretary and operations manager of the L & H. In August, 1928, after the death of Lieutenant Osmond M. Mather, killed in an airplane crash at Buttonwood, R. I., July 26, 1928.

Attempted Endurance Flight.

Lieutenant Dixon gained national prominence a few weeks ago when with Pangborne he attempted to break the world record for sustained flight. Their New Standard plane that they were flying at Syracuse was forced down before the record had been reached. An earlier exploit that spread the fame of the Brainard Field flyer was his daring work in repairing the landing gear of his ship while the plane was in flight over the city. Dixon, using a piece of rope, a leather belt and a sheathstring succeeded in repairing the damaged undercarriage of his plane while hanging by his knees under the fuselage.