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## WOMEN AND AVIATION

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### Flying Lessons at Waikiki

By Marguerite P. Drew

When the first little flying school was opened last year down on the Ala Moana near the school where I had come to teach in Honolulu, I signed up. It was the pioneer and barnstorming stage of aviation here, though our instructors were good. The field itself was a small and decidedly rough stretch of crushed coral surrounded by high tension wires, and with intriguing hazards beyond in the shape of sea, swamp and gulches.

The Department of Commerce representative could not approve it for student solo work so we used to fly over to John Rodgers Field, then in the process of construction, for work on landings, take-offs and so on. Rodgers Field did not even have a wind sock, and the winds of Hawaii are more variable than the proverbial woman's mind. We were invited to inspect the ripples on the water in checking on the moods of the breeze. After breaking one prop and my nose I got to be quite a ripple expert.

My first flight alone above Waikiki Beach was a peculiar one. My irate instructor afterwards demanded to know why I had felt it necessary to travel like a crab. But the fact is that I swim in that water every day, and I had always had my private doubts as to the efficacy of the coral reef in shutting out the sharks. This was my chance to find out, as you can look through the water from above and see every break or opening in the reef. I proceeded to bank one way and then the other so as not to miss an inch of that reef in my checkup. And it's all right - - you can swim at Waikiki in perfect peace of mind, for there's not a place for friend shark to get through.

We, and by we I mean two Japanese boys, a sixty-year-old white man who now has his license, a nice young newspaper man and myself, did all the things one is not supposed to do. We flew low over the Hawaiian fish ponds so we could scare the fish into jumping, we did our solo loops and spins without ever having seen parachutes except

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in the magazines, we chased two delightful red balloons that were floating over Fort De Russy one morning, serenely unaware of the fact that they were the targets for the field artillery. And we went to ground school at night in an old shack that served as a hangar, where we surrounded ourselves with punk to ward off mosquitoes and studied by the light of the kerosene lamp.

Facilities offered us were far from ample, but no landscape could be so lovely to look down on as the floor to our flying "school-room" which is Hawaii.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is taken from a letter from Marguerite P. Drew, who is Hawaii's first and only woman pilot.

#### College Woman Wins Scholarship

Ethel A. Anderson, a senior at the University of Pittsburgh, is the winner of the flying scholarship <sup>offered by</sup> ~~which~~ the Woman's Advertising Club of Pittsburgh. Selection was based on personality, education, financial condition, the desire to make aviation a career and the physical examination. Miss Anderson, who is 23 years old, has worked her way through college, and immediately upon graduation in June she will go to the Pittsburgh-Butler Airport where she will live until she completes her flying course. She will enter the woman's class at the Penn School for Aviation which Louise Thaden, winner of the first woman's air derby, is conducting. This class already has 11 registrants.

#### Can You See to Fly

Before you may have a student permit to take flying instruction you must be able to satisfy an authorized examiner that your eyes can be depended upon to tell you how far is up and what's round about and below, in other words to tell you the truth and nothing but the truth when you take them up into the air. A standardized system of tests has been devised to gauge the eyesight of prospective pilots, most of which were worked out in the Ophthalmology Department of the Army's School of Aviation Medicine, formerly located at Mitchel Field, L.I., and later moved to Brooks Field.

On the staff of this department during 1920-23 was Elizabeth K. Stark, who had trained for scientific research work at Bryn Mawr College. The routine eye examinations combined with experimental research which she did were admirable experience for the work she is now doing in commercial aviation. Her chief in the School of Aviation Medicine was Dr. Louis H. Bauer, <sup>of the medical section,</sup> now chief/medical examiner for  
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Aeronautics Branch of the Department of Commerce. When civil aviation began to get shaped up, one of the first local examiners was Dr. Conrad Berens in New York, who had been in aviation medicine in France during the War. Because of her previous experience, he engaged Miss Stark as his assistant to conduct the eye tests, and to do the "paper" work on the entire examination.

During the last two years, Elizabeth Stark has examined more than two hundred pairs of eyes of pilots and prospective pilots, twenty-five of whom were women. Some of the pilots have been back as many as four times for re-examinations, since both transport pilots and limited commercial pilots must have their physical qualifications checked every six months. She has examined the eyes of a number of well-known pilots, including Amelia Earhart, Lady Mary Heath, Ruth Nichols, Clarence Chamberlain, Bernt Balchen, Frank Hawks, and Harry Rogers. She reports that the only disagreeable part of her job is saying thumbs down to prospective fliers who have a defect in their vision which cannot be corrected by goggles.

#### Things on our Feet

Women pilots who attended the aviation show at Detroit from points distant as well as right around home base are Mary B. Bacon, Brookline, Mass.; Martha Bevins, Hasbrouck Heights, N. J.; Amelia Earhart, New York City, Claire Fahy, Los Angeles; Helen Huntley, Davenport, Ia.; Jean La Rene, Kansas City, Kans.; Ruth Nichols, Rye, N.Y.; Blanche Noyes, Cleveland; Phoebe Omlie, Memphis, Tenn.; Alicia Patterson Simpson, N.Y. City; Elinor Smith, Freeport, L.I.; Hazel Mark Spanagel, Lakewood, Ohio; Mary Von Mach, Detroit, Nellie Willhite, Sioux Falls, S.D. At the suggestion of the Race Committee in charge of the Chicago air races, a meeting was called of the women pilots at the show and Amelia Earhart was appointed chairman of a committee which will send a letter to every licensed woman pilot asking for suggestions on the subject of a woman's derby, including length of the derby, routes, entry qualifications, etc.... Ruth Nichols recently piloted Clarence Chamberlain in his Crescent Monoplane, powered with a Wright Whirlwind motor, on a 3,000 mile swing around the Middle West, and won from him considerable praise both as to her piloting and navigating ability. She maintained an average speed of 150 miles per hour during a good part of the trip. This is by way of contrast with the hare and turtle race-effect at Mitchel Field when she brought her plane down from 3,000 feet a minute slower than it took a parachute jumper to drop, incidentally bettering Chamberlain's own record at the same thing by several seconds..... The Royal Aero Club of Great Britain has awarded the Britannia Trophy for 1929 to Lady Mary Bailey in recognition of her meritorious flight of 18,000 miles from London, round South Africa and back to London.

Pilots' License Notes: The score still stands at 201 as the total number of women pilots, with 21 of them transports, 21 L.C.'s and 159 privates.

N.B. - Whenever a woman receives her pilot's license or increases her license rating, this department would appreciate notification of that fact as soon as possible after it happens. We would be glad to have at the same time, information as to where and in what school she learned to fly, whether she learned to fly for fun of flying or because she plans to earn her living at flying or in some phase of aviation; how long it took her to solo; what her occupation is, if any; her age; and any other vital statistics she or a representative of her flying school may care to send in. Please send this to the address given on the first page.