

June 2016

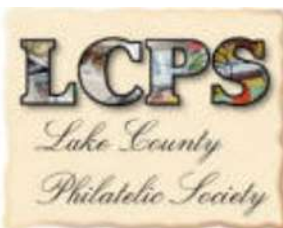
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Newsletter of the Lake County (IL)

Philatelic Society - Established 1933

Website: LCPSHOME.ORG

Perforations

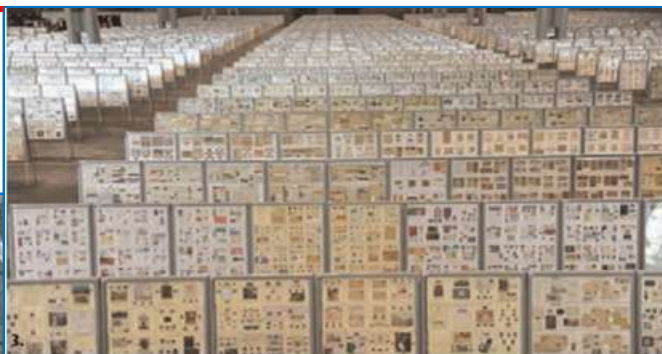


Last month, Tom Willer discussed a bit of the history behind **COMPEX** before opening the floor to discussion on the latest show (21-23 May). In general, the show was good but the marketing of the event was lacking this year. The main failure being the lack of signage at the site and directions/map on how to get to the show on the flyer.



This month, Tom Willer and Bill Schultz will review the World Stamp Show 2016 held in New York City the last week of May. With over 70 dealers and Postal Authorities, this was the largest single show thus far in this century.

There will also be a few prizes given out this month ...



An operational "Jenny" (left); Rows and rows of competitive exhibit frames (Above) from Linn's 2016-06-27

Treasures' Report: Total – \$ 3,344.39

**Local
Stamp
Shows**

MSDA MILWAUKEE SHOW
Crowne Plaza Milwaukee Airport
6401 South 13th St
Milwaukee WI
June 25 and 26



MSDA STAMP SHOW
Country Inn and Suites
600 Milwaukee Ave
Prospect Heights IL
July 9 and 10



MSDA STAMP SHOW
Lindner Conf Center
610 E. Butterfield Rd.,
Lombard IL
September 10 and 11



MILCOPEX
Crowne Plaza Milwaukee Airport
6401 South 13th St
Milwaukee WI
September 16-18

Next meeting:
7-PM on Tuesday, 28 June 2016
at the Grayslake Library
100 Library Lane - Grayslake, IL 60030



Officers:

Dr Tom Willer – President
Bill Schultz – Vice President
Dave Sadler – Secretary
Ed Pieklo – Treasurer

All was well, so Major Fleet thought. He had instructed Boyle to follow the railroad tracks northward out of Washington's Union Station all the way to Philadelphia An hour later, another phone call came in from Bustleton Field. Webb (flying in from New York) had arrived there and turned the mail over to Edgerton, who loaded it aboard, along with the southbound Philadelphia mail.

Culver loaded his northbound Philadelphia mail and waited for Boyle. When Boyle did not arrive in a reasonable time, Culver took off anyway at 1415. and arrived at Belmont to a rousing welcome – **even though he carried no mail from Washington.**

Meanwhile, a call came to Colonel Arnold (Major Fleet's boss) from Boyle about an hour after he had departed the Polo Grounds. Lost and nearly out of gas, he had landed in a farmer's field at Waldorf, Md., 20 miles **southeast** of his takeoff point. The plane had flipped over on its back and the prop was splintered, but he was unhurt. Luckily, for him,, he had crashed on property next door to that owned by Otto Praeger, second assistant postmaster general (who was in charge of the airmail operation). His mail was **quietly** trucked back to Washington.

Instead of following the railroad tracks northward, LT Boyle had followed a branch line out of the Washington rail yard that took him southeast instead of north. His unreliable compass was no help. The young lieutenant had become not only the first official, scheduled-airmail pilot to depart with mail from Washington but, unhappily, had also become the first airmail pilot to get lost and the first to have an accident.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Edgerton had landed on schedule at the Polo Grounds that afternoon to be greeted by a relieved Fleet and a small (but enthusiastic) crowd. He carried 150 pounds of letters and several copies of *The New York Times*.

LT Boyle's mail bags were sent by air next day on the scheduled northbound flight. That flight carried 600 letters, including the one President Wilson had autographed – only a day late. The established rail service would have been faster and cheaper in this case.

Result: The first day of the airmail service was termed a complete success by Post Office Department officials. Fleet, Lipsner and a few other government personnel felt differently.

While no one else seemed to worry about Boyle's flying skill, Fleet was very concerned. He wanted a replacement pilot assigned immediately, but Postmaster General Bureson asked Colonel Arnold to 'give the young man a chance.' Which they did ...

Two days after his forced landing, Boyle took off again, this time with Edgerton flying ahead following the four-track Pennsylvania Railroad in a training Jenny to make sure Boyle was headed in the right direction. About 50 miles north of Washington where the railroad crossed the Susquehanna, Edgerton waved Boyle ahead, **confident that he could not get lost** going the rest of the distance to Philadelphia, and returned to Washington.

Ah, but Boyle got lost again. Completely disoriented after Edgerton turned back, our directionally challenged homing pigeon edged ever southward again in the area's typical spring haze and followed the shoreline of Chesapeake Bay. After three hours and 15 minutes, he landed in a pasture at Cape Charles at the tip of the Virginia Cape. As the good Major commented in his report of this day's operation, '*Only the Atlantic Ocean and lack of gas prevented him going farther.*'

To Fleet's dismay, postal officials again requested that 'Lieutenant Boyle be given a third chance and, if he fails, the Department will take the responsibility for his failure.' Fleet protested and denied the request, saying with uncharacteristic restraint, '**The conclusion has been reached that the best interests of the service require that Lieutenant Boyle be relieved from this duty.**' He was finally backed up in his decision by Secretary of War Baker.

Even with the hiccups, the Army, despite all the "help" from the USPOD, proved that the service was feasible, giving the postal officials something to brag about — but the public did not want to pay the extra charge for airmail stamps. Planeloads of mail averaged less than 50 pounds daily. However, when the airmail experiment with the Army Air Service ended after three months, the operational statistics were impressive. For the time period, despite the mishaps and interrupted schedules — the Army pilots had successfully completed 270 flights and had carried 40,500 pounds of mail. They had flown a total of 421½0 hours without a fatality or serious injury. Of the trips flown, 53 were forced down because of bad weather and 16 had ended in forced landings due to mechanical malfunctions. Lieutenant James Edgerton had the best record, with 52 trips covering 7,155 miles and only one forced landing.

Thus ends phase one of the saga of the US Airmail Service. Later, we will look at the first civilian phase and the establishment of transcontinental route.

This basis for this article was written originally by C.V. Glines from the May 1994 issue of Aviation History.

Army Airmail Postmortem: Major Fleet's next assignment was as the Army Air Service's Engineering Division where he played key roles in the development of the turbocharger for aero applications. Fleet was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for his Airmail service but with the post-war budgets slashed and commissioned officers being reduced one rank, Fleet felt he'd gone as far as he could in military aviation. On 30 November 1922, Thanksgiving Day, Fleet, his superior officer and the chief of the Power Plant Section announced to the press that they were resigning.

He went on to create the Consolidated Aircraft Company in San Diego CA, producing the PBV Catalina Patrol Bomber and B-24 Liberator used in WWII.

After (fully) retiring, he founded the San Diego Aerospace Museum (1965) and was later that year, was invested in the International Aerospace Hall of Fame. In 1973, the Reuben H. Fleet Space Theatre (San Diego CA) was established with an initial gift by the Fleet family. It was the first science museum to combine interactive science exhibits with a planetarium and very large screen theater, setting the standard that most major science museums have since followed.

He died in San Diego CA on 29 October 1975, at age 88, from injuries related to a fall.

