

TAT

TRANSCONTINENTAL AIR TRANSPORT, INC.

PLANE TALK

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July, 1929

"THE DAY WE ARE PROPERLY READY"

FOURTEEN months of intensive preparation were completed on July 8 when the service of Transcontinental Air Transport, Inc., was formally offered to the public. Inaugural flights were made by two planes departing from each of the T A T terminals at Columbus and Los Angeles.

At the controls of the first east bound plane was Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh, chairman of the technical committee of T A T and aeronautical adviser to the Pennsylvania Railroad.

In Los Angeles on the afternoon of July 7, Colonel Lindbergh, seated in the office of Governor C. C. Young of California, pressed a button which flashed a signal across the continent to a huge bell in the Pennsylvania station, New York. At the tap of the bell the wheels of "The Airway Limited," a new train of the Pennsylvania, began to move, carrying its first load of passengers to the plane connection at Port Columbus.

Simplicity itself marked the ceremonies in which Colonel Lindbergh took part. Only a few persons witnessed the event. Among them were Mrs. Lindbergh; Governor Young; Mayor John C. Porter of Los Angeles; Mr. J. V. Magee and Major C. C. Moseley, Vice Presidents of T A T; Mr. H. W. Beck, Western Traffic Manager of T A T; Mr. R. K. Rochester, General Man-

ager of the Pennsylvania Railroad, Philadelphia; Mr. J. L. Maddux, President of Maddux Air Lines, and Mrs. Maddux, and Lieut. D. W. Tomlinson, Vice President of Maddux Air Lines.

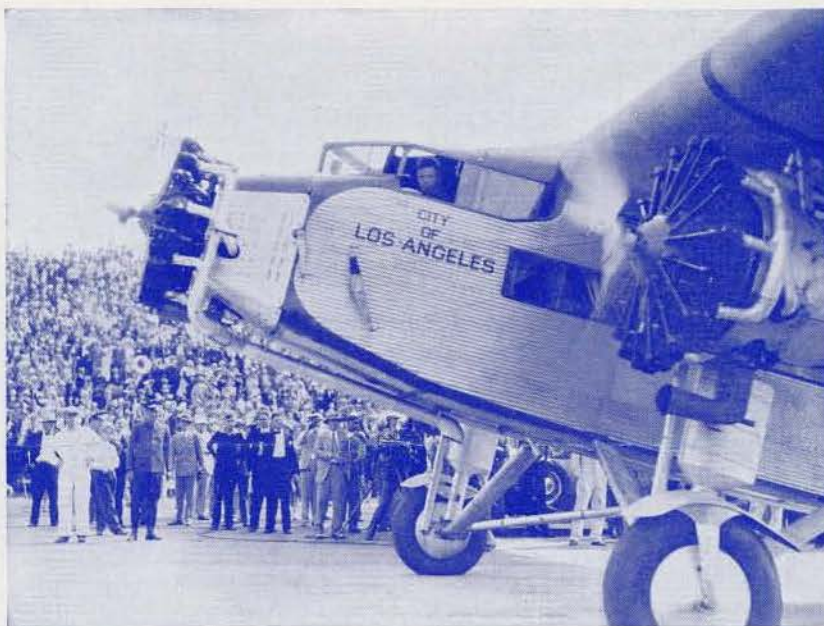
A crowd which filled the huge Penn-

Colonel Paul Henderson, Vice President of T A T, presided at the ceremonies which were broadcast over a radio hook-up. Among the speakers were Miss Earhart; Mr. Elisha Lee, Vice President, Pennsylvania Railroad; Dr. John H. Finley, Editor, New York Times, and Hon. Grover Whalen, Police Commissioner.

On the station platform a white ribbon secured to the train and the platform was parted when the starting signal came from Colonel Lindbergh, and Miss Stone formally inducted "The Airway Limited" into service. Miss Betty Brainerd of the Associated Newspapers, held the end of the ribbon aboard the train.

About fifty persons including officers and directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad and T A T, and officials of other aviation companies, accompanied the train on its inaugural trip in addition to those who were to transfer to the plane at Port Columbus.

Many telegrams of congratulation addressed to General W. W. Atterbury, President of the Pennsylvania and Mr. C. M. Keys, President of T A T, were received during the ceremonies and aboard the train. They came from high government officials, governors, mayors, editors and men interested directly in the promotion of commercial aviation.



Colonel Lindbergh was at the controls of the "City of Los Angeles" on its inaugural flight from the western terminal of TAT.

sylvania station witnessed the ceremonies in New York before the first departure of the new train.

The *City of New York*, one of the fleet of T A T ships placed in the station, was christened by Miss Amelia Earhart, Assistant to the General Traffic Manager of T A T, and "The Airway Limited" was christened by Miss Dorothy Stone.

Parts of some of the telegrams are quoted below:

From F. Trubee Davison, Assistant Secretary of War:

With my congratulations I couple the prediction that this splendid means of bringing the two seaboard of our country closer together in terms of time will be a great factor toward the promotion of aerial transportation and a great contribution toward the continued advancement of national prosperity and progress.

From David S. Ingalls, Assistant Secretary of the Navy:

I wish to congratulate you and the Pennsylvania Railroad on the splendid achievement which inaugurates the linking of air and rail transportation into a great system which will result in many benefits to the people of this country.

From W. Irving Glover, Assistant Postmaster General.

May I add my words of congratulation to the Pennsylvania Railroad for the forward step it takes today in linking its



Christening ceremonies for "The Airway Limited" were held in the Pennsylvania station in New York. Miss Dorothy Stone, who christened the new train is standing directly behind the white post. To Miss Stone's right are Miss Amelia Earhart and Col. Paul Henderson, Vice-President of T A T. Many others in the photograph were passengers aboard the train to Port Columbus.

to be so closely linked by the new air transportation service which is being inaugurated today. Anyone who contributes toward this bringing nearer together the various states of the Union is doing a splendid service to our country as a whole.

From James J. Walker, Mayor, New York City:

Accept my cordial congratulations on your inauguration of the first forty-eight hour rail-air service joining New York and California. This long step forward in bringing East and West together marks a great advance in our national growth and solidarity and the thanks of the nation will flow to you and your associates in the pioneer enterprise.

Three other telegrams are quoted in full for the insight they give into the hopes of high officials of T A T and the Pennsylvania for the new air-rail service.

One from Colonel Lindbergh to General Atterbury follows:

Department, congratulations on the inauguration of the first rail and air transcontinental passenger service. We admire your vision and enterprise in this great undertaking and are confident that it will not only be a great success but will add greatly to the prestige and reputation of your great railroad.

From Franklin D. Roosevelt, Governor of New York:

My congratulations on the opening of regular passenger service by train and air to the coast. This is another milestone in the history of American transportation.

From C. C. Young, Governor of California:

Please convey to the governor of New York my best regards and my feeling of pleasure that the Atlantic and Pacific seaboard are



A group at the entrance to the "City of Los Angeles," just before Colonel Lindbergh took the controls. Left to right are Douglas Fairbanks, Maj. C. C. Moseley, Vice-President of TAT; Mrs. Lindbergh, Mary Pickford, Colonel Lindbergh, Dudley Steele and John Bowers.

great system with the most modern form of transportation—aviation. This combined service shrinks the boundaries of the country so that the gateway of the Pennsylvania Railroad is just a run and a hop to that of Los Angeles.

From Hiram Bingham, United States Senator:

This occasion should be a source of pride to every American who has his national welfare at heart because it marks a progressive step that will further America's prestige in the air and will give to our people the advantages of travel by air in conjunction with our great railway system. Confidence in air transportation should increase materially as a result of the efforts of yourself and your associates to present a well organized and reliable air-rail service.

From W. A. Moffett, Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy:

Please accept on my behalf and that of the bureau of aeronautics of the Navy



Amelia Earhart, Assistant to the General Traffic Manager of TAT, takes part in the christening ceremonies of City of Philadelphia at Los Angeles.



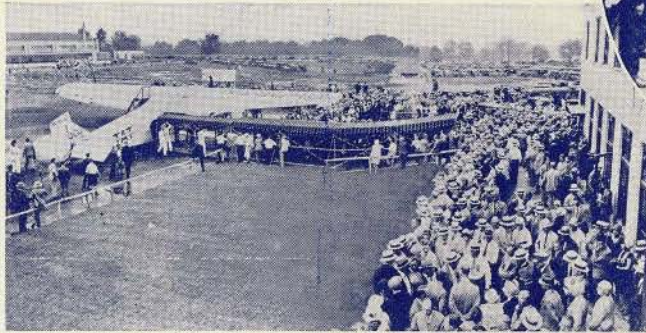
Inaugural passengers about to board the plane after their brief stop in Kansas City. In the center of the group, half facing the camera is Miss Amelia Earhart, assistant to the General Traffic Manager of TAT.

I wish to extend my congratulations upon the opening of a new era of passenger transportation. Your decision to place the facilities and experience of the Pennsylvania Railroad behind the development of an air-rail transcontinental passenger line has made possible the construction of a system without parallel either in the United States or in Europe. I believe that the significance of this service lies not alone in the fact that we are bringing the Atlantic and Pacific coasts within forty-eight hours of each other but rather that it opens the way to what heretofore has been an impossible dream—the elimination of daytime travel. The present service requires two business days to cross the continent. Our night service which is now in the process of organization will require but one and I am confident that the next decade will bring about overnight travel between New York and California over our lines. In other words there will be no loss of time between San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York. From a technical standpoint the four divisions of our system are ready for

Several thousand persons witnessed the arrival of the first "Airway Limited" at Port Columbus and the departure of the first two T A T planes, the "City of Columbus" and the "City of Wichita." In oval, "The Airway Limited," arrives at the Port Columbus station. Below, crowds surrounding the field and the canopy



leading to the "City of Columbus." Below, looking very much like two huge bugs, the two planes taxi to the center of the field for the take-off. At bottom, breakfast was served in the hangar at Columbus immediately after the planes took off. Mr. T. B. Clement, General Traffic Manager of T A T was host.



operation. Every precaution which modern methods have devised has been taken for the safety of our passengers and I feel confident that we start operation today with a system which combines the elements of safety, comfort and rapidity of travel in their highest degree.

From General Atterbury to Mr. Keys:

My heartiest congratulations in the magnificent work you have done in promoting commercial aviation and bringing this into harmony with established railroad service. The inauguration of our new train, "The Airway Limited," marks the actual opening of the first forty-eight hour transcontinental rail-air service. This service is a great milestone in Transportation progress. The christening of your flagship, "The City of New York," dedicates to the public service this great joint enterprise in which both our companies are interested. May it achieve the full measure of success that we have visualized for it.

And the reply of Mr. Keys to General Atterbury:

Never has an older form of transportation extended to a new form such generous and unstinting co-operation as you and your fellow officers of the Pennsylvania system have given to Transcontinental Air Transport in its task of forming the "Lindbergh Line" across the continent. Forty-eight hours from coast to coast is an achievement to fire the imagination. Few realize the enormous care required and the vast groundwork organization to be perfected before we could with confidence give the signal to start. "The Airway Limited," starting tonight, carries our hopes and the best we have been able to give to the task.

In the three telegrams lies something of the story of the prepara-

tions made by T A T during the fourteen months which lapsed between the time it was conceived and its inauguration.

In the preparatory period, the details of which have been recounted from time to time in PLANE TALK, three million dollars were invested in the proper ground facilities in order that T A T planes might operate with the reliability and comfort of the associated railroads.

Facilities not ordinarily deemed necessary in the operation of an air line have been included in the organization of the Company that it might take its place as a standard system of passenger transportation. The largest private weather bureau in the world protects the passen-

ger from weather hazards. A two-way radio communication system between plane and ground keeps the pilot aloft in constant communication with ground stations, and a tele-type system of ground communication permits instant transmission of messages between all stations.

Passenger stations, equal in comfort and convenience to a railroad passenger station have been erected at all T A T ports, and the airports themselves have been prepared thoroughly for the operation of the great fleet of planes. The airports and airways have been lighted for the night flying predicted by Colonel Lindbergh.

A "dress rehearsal" period in which planes were flown some 50,000 miles and 261 passengers carried, was ordered before the inauguration of regular service was permitted. In the dress rehearsal not the slightest flaw appeared in the continuity of scheduled operation.

Because the Pennsylvania Railroad was assured of such thorough preparation, that great railroad system has invested heavily in T A T and placed its experience back of the new venture.

Further impressive inauguration ceremonies were held at Port Columbus between the time of the arrival of "The Airway Limited" and the departure of the two planes, the *City of Columbus* and the *City of Wichita* on their maiden flights.

The signal for the take-off was flashed from Washington when Robert P. Lamont, Secretary of



Mr. Henry Ford, right, and his son Edsel Ford, left, were guests at the hangar breakfast at Port Columbus. They are shown here with Mr. T. B. Clement, general traffic manager of TAT.

Commerce, pushed a button which sounded a gong at planeside in Port Columbus. As the *City of Columbus* took off, it exposed to view a memorial tablet sunk in the ground in front of the administration building.

On the tablet were the words:

Port Columbus
founded by
The People of Columbus
and dedicated to
**THE NAVIGATION OF
THE AIR**
July 8, 1929.

A steady rain which began falling as the planes took off did not prevent a crowd of 3,000 persons attending the ceremonies. The planes were permitted to take off only because the weather bureau had reports of good flying weather west of Columbus.

Passengers aboard the first two planes were:

City of Columbus

MISS AMELIA EARHART, Assistant to the General Traffic Manager, T A T.
COLONEL PAUL HENDERSON, Vice President, T A T.
PAUL HENDERSON, JR., Son of Colonel Henderson.
MISS BETTY BRAINERD, Associated Newspapers, New York City.
U. GRANT BORDER, U. S. Border and Sons, New York City.
COLONEL EDGAR S. GORRELL, President, Stutz Motor Co., Indianapolis.
ALBERT A. GARTHWAITE, Vice President, Lee Tire Co., Conshohocken, Penn.
S. W. HIGGINS, Dennison Manufacturing Co., Boston, Mass.
DANIEL M. SHEAFFER, Chief of Passenger Transportation, Pennsylvania Railroad.
J. W. BRENNAN, Central Traffic Manager, T A T.

City of Wichita

WILLIAM CHAPLIN, Associated Press, New York City.
MRS. JOHN T. LITCH, Boston, Mass.
MISS M. A. SALOMON, Chamber of Commerce, Brooklyn.
MRS. G. P. PUTNAM, New York City.
MRS. F. C. KENNEY, Indianapolis, Ind.
E. E. GREINER, Springfield, Ohio.
WILLIAM JAMES BRYANT, Nation's Business, Washington, D. C.
CARL LARSEN and CHARLES TICE of Fox Movietone News and Equipment.

Mr. T. B. Clement, General Traffic Manager, T A T, was host at breakfast in the T A T hangar immediately following the departure of the two planes. Included among the guests were Mr. Henry Ford, whose company manufactures the planes with which service started, his son, Edsel Ford, Mr. William B. Mayo, Chief Engineer of the Ford Company and Mr. Harvey Firestone.



first two ships to leave Los Angeles. Above Mary Pickford christening the "City of Los Angeles." Below, Gloria Swanson christening the "City of Philadelphia."

Action was a feature of the christening ceremonies in Los Angeles when two prominent screen stars broke bottles over the propeller hubs of the



A crowd estimated at 30,000 attended the christening ceremonies in Los Angeles on July 8 when the first east bound plane was put into service. Mary Pickford, screen star, formally christened the *City of Los Angeles* just before it took off on its first regular flight piloted by Colonel Lindbergh. Celebrities from the stage, screen and aviation worlds took part in the Los Angeles ceremonies.



Charles Tice, left, and Carl Larsen, right, of the Fox Movietone News, made sound pictures of the inaugural trip. They are shown here photographing some choice bit of scenery to the sound accompaniment of the motors.

The first east bound passengers were:

City of Los Angeles

A. L. ROCKLEIN, Los Angeles Examiner.
T. DELAPP, Los Angeles Times.
JACK SCANLON, Los Angeles.
M. D. SCHATZMAN, Los Angeles.
THOMAS B. EASTLAND, San Francisco, Director T A T.
R. W. MILLAR, Banker, Los Angeles.
MRS. CHARLES A. LINDBERGH.
MAJOR C. C. MOSELEY, Vice President, T A T.
DR. W. J. FURIE, Long Beach, Calif.

City of Philadelphia

ALBERT HITCHIN, Insurance Broker, Los Angeles.
R. K. ROCHESTER, Vice-President, Pennsylvania Railroad, Philadelphia.
MRS. R. K. ROCHESTER.
CHARLES WALKER, Fox News, Los Angeles.
MISS VELVA DARLING, Los Angeles.
JOHN B. AUSTIN, President, Chamber of Commerce, Los Angeles.
TURNER WILLS, Los Angeles.

Colonel Lindbergh piloted the *City of Los Angeles* only as far as Winslow and on July 9 piloted the first westbound plane into the Los Angeles terminal.

The plane was christened *City of Philadelphia* by Gloria Swanson, screen star, on its return to Los Angeles with Colonel Lindbergh at the controls. Another crowd estimated at 20,000 attended the second christening when the passengers who had left New York on the first "Airway Limited" arrived in the California terminal.

Brief ceremonies were held at each T A T station as the inaugural planes paused for fuel. Schedules were maintained accurately over the entire route.

Thus the long preparatory period insisted upon by T A T was ended. "The day we are properly ready," designated many months ago by Mr. C. M. Keys, President of T A T, as the starting date for service, had arrived. The efficiency of operation and the confidence with which T A T has been accepted by the traveling public, has fully compensated the great expenditures of time and money.

The impression of one of the inaugural passengers, recorded in a telegram written enroute is set forth below as typical of the reactions of T A T passengers:

Even with fifteen years of flying experience this inaugural trip over T A T is astoundingly pleasant as we now are flying above continental divide at nine thousand feet. I have just looked down upon lava beds and into extinct volcano craters and observed scenery as mankind never before has seen it. I predict a great future for T A T. All passengers aboard are highly enthusiastic over trip scenic effects and T A T efficiency. Never again do I wish to use a railroad to cross the continent.

(Signed) Edgar S. Gorrell, President, Stutz Motor Car Corp. of America.

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