

PLANE TALK



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A HONOLULU HOLIDAY BY AIR, RAIL AND SEA

by Walton Forstall*

IT DOES not seem possible for me to do justice on the written page to the impressions of our sixteen-day round trip between Philadelphia and Honolulu—10,000 miles of ever changing views. Every variety of land, sea and airspace. First experience of air and of sea travel. Less than three weeks ago, I had never been in the air. Today, I look back on four complete days and 4,200 miles of air voyaging. I had never been to sea. Today, I recall 4,000 miles of Pacific Ocean rollers and azure skies.

The trip began conventionally enough (for these days) by a motor ride from Rosemont to North Philadelphia, where we boarded the Airway Limited Wednesday night, July 24th. Thursday morning found us approaching Port Columbus. Here at 7:35 we made the first of many agreeable contacts with the courteous and efficient personnel of Transcontinental Air Transport, Inc.

Weights of passengers and baggage were recorded to ensure no loading beyond capacity. A few moments before starting time we boarded the plane and promptly at 8:15 we were off. Later experience proved that T A T always starts on time and arrives on time (or before) where conditions of arrival and departure are under its control.

From my seat I could watch one of the landing wheels as it ran over the concrete

strip, while we gained speed. In a little over ten seconds, I noticed it was off the ground. Up we went, but I soon realized that for the time at least we were flying low. This, as I found out afterwards,

humans to look up and wave, dogs to bark defiance, made horses and cattle scamper wildly and drove chickens to the nearest cover, seeking refuge from some gigantic hawk.

We looked upon a land which seemed sadly lacking in moisture, with many corn-fields apparently beyond redemption, and we could see plainly where the farmer had given up hope, by comparing the area originally planted with that now being cultivated. And cultivating corn was what every farmer seemed to be doing. Most of them stopped long enough to look up, and perhaps wave to us.

FOR some years I had been the worker on the ground, looking up at planes as they passed over my Rosemont garden. Now I was in the air and was enjoying to the full that view about which I had often thought. When our air line paralleled a motor road, we had the fun of passing every car without having to watch for cars coming towards us. A plane at ninety miles per hour (our lowest speed) puts even the most inveterate road speed fiend "hors concours."

The arrow flight of 408 miles to St. Louis showed what a smiling land is that part of the Mississippi Valley, abounding with substantial farm houses and barns, with now and then towns of varying sizes, but all having individual houses, each in its own green surroundings. One of the many advantages of an air journey to the country lover, is that it takes you over the open spaces, not through congested centers and past the ugly sights that so often stretch out along a railroad right of way.

Our first stop was at Indianapolis, where we had an opportunity for about twenty minutes to walk around and begin the comparison of airports. It would be a liberal education for some of our City



Reprinted by courtesy of Columbus Dispatch and A. W. Ireland, the artist.

was because of head winds and probably rough air in the higher levels, a condition which continued until we reached St. Louis.

Flying as we did, at only 300 feet, gave a wonderful opportunity to "see the world go by." And what an interesting world it was—those countrysides of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. It had not yet grown used to our tremendous three-motored Ford. The roar of our propellers brought

*EDITOR'S NOTE—

A great many accounts have been written of air travel but it remained for Walton Forstall, Distribution Engineer of the Philadelphia Gas Works Company, to write this graphic description of his voyage from Philadelphia to Honolulu via T A T. Mr. Forstall's article has all the freshness of viewpoint of the traveler who is making his first trip by air. The story which is printed here by courtesy of Mr. Forstall is believed entirely worthy of PLANE TALK readers' time.

Fathers to make some air trips and see a few first-class airports.

As this was my first landing, I waited with interest for the moment when the wheels would make contact, but I found that for a good pilot, a gentle landing is a matter of course, and with a hard runway provided, there is little bumping.

I had expected that the roar of the plane would be a very objectionable accompaniment that must be endured. I found that even though our windows were often open wide, the noise was not bad, and though I used the proffered cotton in my ears, others did not. At each landing, when I removed the cotton, I had no sense of impaired hearing.

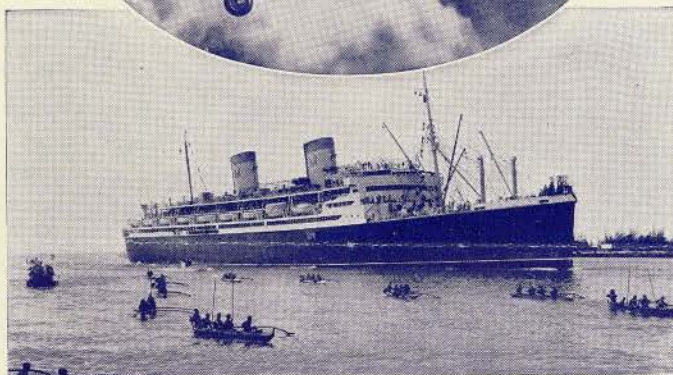
On approaching St. Louis I watched for the Mississippi, but was actually more impressed with the width of recently flooded areas than with the actual stream beneath. The St. Louis airport was a scene of great activity. Many people and many planes. The port, unfortunately, belongs to the City and sadly lacks the concrete runways of Port Columbus. Every departing plane blew clouds of dust over the many by-



Meteor Crater in Arizona, a mile in diameter and hundreds of feet deep, caused by a celestial projectile, one of the sights of Mr. Forstall's T A T trip.

standers, augmented as they were by the numerous photographers waiting impatiently for the end of the endurance flight then in its 291st hour. As we now know, they had a long waiting time ahead of them, but they feared to miss the moment of the flight's end,—430 hours.

It had been hot on Indianapolis ground. It was hotter at St. Louis. Therefore, it was most delightful to soar to 4,500 feet and later to 6,000 feet as we winged ahead for Kansas City. It was as if I had learned the alphabet of aviation by the low flying and now I was having the delights of noble reading. There were as yet no very far views because of mist, due to condensation of rising hot air, but I had my first experience of flying above, and through, clouds, just as a little earlier



The two modern transport modes employed by Mr. Forstall to complete his Philadelphia-Honolulu trip in six days: The T A T plane City of Columbus and the SS. Malolo, fast Matson ship.

in the day I had passed over birds in flight. For years man tried in vain to do just these things.

AS we sailed high up above the world, we enjoyed our lunch served on individual tables at each seat. Kansas City soon came and went. By this time we were getting used to landings and departures and becoming experts on airports. We were more and more delighted with the comfort of air travel and amazed at the distance covered in a given time as compared with any previously tried method of transportation, and yet, though I knew our scheduled speed was ninety miles, I could see as I gazed out of my window a landing wheel poised as it were in space, and apparently motionless, for at 5,000 feet or thereabouts, even ninety miles gives very slight relative motion against the earth. With ground view cut off as by a cloud, all sense of translation is lost.



Reminiscent of Mission days is the T A T station's dining room at Albuquerque where T A T travelers dine between plane hops.

One of my first desires with high flying was to get a proper idea of ground scale. I thought it quite likely that the

square and rectangular areas spread out below as cultivated fields or pasturage were 40, 80, 120, 160 or some other multiple of 40 acres, and I believed that certain prominent roads were section lines and therefore a mile apart, but I could not be sure until I had timed the plane for forty seconds—one mile. I used this method continually thereafter to make my mind appreciate how slow my eyes were to lose a groundling's idea of distance.

Forty acres was the favorite unit for cultivation and I saw many a square mile with at least eight of these areas. There were seldom any smaller. At 5,000 feet, 40 acres seems about like two, and farm buildings are toy Noah's arks, while an automobile directly below is a beetle with something less than a beetle's speed. Surely I was traveling in a world of wonders and I kept my eyes outward and downward.

As we sped westward over Kansas, we began to see pools in the clay soil, first of water and then a few of oil, with accompanying derricks. A long, straight scar across the earth near Wichita, was



What Mr. Forstall saw at the western terminus of his air trip, Glendale Airport.

the refilled ditch of a pipe line. For the time being, farms had disappeared, but cultivated land again became the rule after Wichita, our fourth landing, was behind us. And how beautifully cultivated it was! The even rows of crops, the effect of parquet floors produced by plowed land, has left me with a great admiration for the hand that holds the plow, and this symmetry of agriculture as seen from the skies was most enjoyable.

One ever-present phenomenon of the land-viewed-from-the-sky was the effect of water either present or past. In Missouri and Kansas, sinuous lines of green always meant trees along water courses. Farther west, when bare land was the rule and this the dry season, the earth was marked by seemingly every past rivulet and with its myriad reticulations resembled a huge

TAT RATE REDUCTION EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 15

RECOGNIZING the ever increasing popularity of air travel, with the rapidly rising demand for the type of luxurious transportation offered by Transcontinental Air Transport, Inc., a substantial reduction in rates has been made, effective November 15th.

Under the new tariff the transcontinental fare, formerly \$338.10, has been reduced to \$267.43, a rate which includes all meals west of Columbus, Ohio, both on train and plane. Under the former rate meals were only included where they were served on the plane.

The new rates place T A T travel service within the reach of almost every traveller to whom time saving and comfort are important elements. They provide

a differential from the country's "Blue Ribbon" trains that is comparatively slight.

For instance, it is now possible to go from Indianapolis to St. Louis for \$30, against a former fare of \$38, making the trip of more than 200 miles in two hours, a saving of four hours in the heart of the business day.

Kansas City, normally 34 hours from New York is brought within 19 hours via T A T for \$112.43, as contrasted with \$136.43 under the former rates. The trip is accomplished with the loss of only one-half of a business day.

Where the former tariff only provided meals on the planes, the present reduced rates include meals on planes and at the

Harvey House in Waynoka. The only meals the passenger is expected to purchase are those on the Pennsylvania diner between New York and Columbus.

Similar striking reductions will apply on the western division of the line between Los Angeles and Clovis, New Mexico. For example, the fare from Los Angeles to Albuquerque, formerly \$119, becomes \$89 under the reduced tariff, the trip being made in six hours against almost a 24-hour journey by train.

T A T has taken the lead in meeting demand for air transportation at popular fares, a circumstance made possible by the popularity the Company has enjoyed during its operation.

leaf. The arrangement of this veining indicated unmistakably the slope of the ground and corrected false impressions often made by cloud shadows, for water does not run uphill.

AS we neared the end of our first day's journey at Waynoka, the land grew red and scarred, the farm houses poorer and more scattered. Yet there were evidences of material wealth in the shape of much agricultural machinery rather poorly cared for. From the airport a most comfortable bus conveyed us five miles to the Santa Fe station. Here, as at every stopping place, was a T A T rest house, exterior and interior pleasing to the eye and with all necessary conveniences, this at Waynoka including shower and bath. The day had been hot, but night was bringing coolness, and after a good dinner at a special table in the railroad restaurant, it seemed but a short time under the beautiful night sky before boarding the train at eleven.

Morning found us on time nearing Clovis, New Mexico. T A T representatives met the train and our little company breakfasted together. Again our aerobus took us to the airport, and, as we went, our train sped thundering by. How brief indeed was its triumph, for in a short time we winged high above it as it crawled like a worm along the surface, and when it finally reached Los Angeles on Saturday night, I was on the Pacific Ocean, over 100 miles at sea. Is there any more striking illustration of the speed of air travel?

Westward we went over rough country. Looking down on rugged slopes, I decided

that on foot I might take an hour to go the distance, passing beneath me in one minute as I sat in comfort and gazed to

WHO'S WHO IN TAT



LITERALLY a very important link in TAT's organization is E. W. Proctor, Communications Engineer. As the designer of the present very efficient airplane radio transmitter and receiver, he has provided the nerve center of T A T's communication system. His set was described in detail in October PLANE TALK.

Mr. Proctor is a native of Washington, D. C., and received his education at the University of Cincinnati, taking courses in electrical and mechanical engineering. He came to T A T in February, 1929, after a year and a half with N A T, during which time he supervised the installation of radio beacons and receivers for the mail line. He is unmarried, and his business is his hobby.

far horizons. What a marvel it all was and yet how soon do we take such things for granted. Here the cultivated country was in huge ranches and I saw some furrows at least half a mile long. Talk of wide open spaces!

Throughout our trip the talk was "Wait till you land in New Mexico and Arizona if you want to know what heat is." This we never did, because we hit a cool day and Albuquerque, Winslow and Kingman came and went with nothing worse than 85° and always a good breeze. In the plane it was always cool and at times too cool for my light-weight clothes. My hand outside the window felt air in the sixties, except a short distance east of Los Angeles when the plane grew warm and for perhaps ten miles we went through a huge chimney of hot air rising from the desert below.

THE Colorado River, as we crossed it above Needles did not look the mighty stream we knew it to be. It seemed comparatively low, but luxuriant green marked the areas under water during flood, making a sharp contrast with the desert on each side.

That journey across Southern California! So swift and with such varying scenery. Mountains, valley and plain, desert and irrigated orchards; one ever-changing kaleidoscope. Again the symmetry of cultivation. Squares and rectangles of green dots, probably most of them orange trees. Three mountain lakes, towns more numerous as we approach the coast; finally, perhaps the greenest spot of all—Pasadena, and then as our motor slows we know we are at journey's end and glide

FEMININE ATTIRE FOR THE AIRWAYS



by *Audre W. Boshart*
Assistant to the General
Traffic Manager
TRANSCONTINENTAL AIR
TRANSPORT, INC.

PROBABLY the question asked most often by women travelers about to take the air is, "What shall I wear?" And the question always surprises me. Usually I answer by asking another question. "What would you wear if you were going by train?"

Air travel should not be considered as an initiation into a new mystery which requires special plans months ahead, a special wardrobe, and highly complicated arrangements. If you were going from New York to Los Angeles or from Kansas City to Columbus by train, you would pack a few things into a bag, go to the railroad station, purchase your ticket and get aboard the train.

Air travel is equally simple. You pack your bag, buy your ticket, the air operator takes you to the field in an unusually comfortable trailer car, and you enplane.

For my part I prefer tailored suits or dresses for air travel. But then I prefer the same for train or business wear. If you like tailored suits for traveling, you wear them for air travel. If you like sports things for train travel, that's what you should wear for air travel. In other words, no changes necessary for this most modern form of transportation.

You will find this advantage in air travel, too. You take only about half the things you need for a train trip of equal length, for your trip by air lasts just half the time. T A T, for instance, permits thirty pounds of baggage to be taken aboard the plane. What woman needs more than thirty pounds of the kind of things we wear for her journeys by air?

And don't worry about heat or cold. Adapt your apparel to the season and depend upon T A T to do the same. If you travel in the winter, you will find the planes heated. If you are a summer traveler, you open the windows and regulate the temperature to suit yourself.

Forget that your trip is to be by air. Plan it just as you would any other trip. Prepare to be as comfortable as you would on the very best trains; expect to find the same conveniences you find on the train. You'll be pleasantly surprised at the thoughtful preparations the air line has made for its women passengers.

down in Glendale, which that day witnessed the coming or going by airway of several hundred people.

The two hours and more before we left for San Francisco sufficed for a nine-mile ride to Hollywood for dinner. Returning, we visited until train time. In the morning I again watched motor cars, but this time from an observation platform which moved at motor car speed, so I saw only southbound cars.

Our time at San Francisco gave leisure to reach the S.S. Malolo (a Philadelphia-built ship, launched at Cramp's shipyard in 1926) lying at her dock, put suitcases in our very comfortable and roomy state-room and spend an hour on lower Market Street before returning to the ship to watch departure preparations. It was all new to me, especially the paper ropes by which friends on the dock maintained contact with travelers on board until the moving vessel broke the miniature hawsers.

VOYAGE by sea is so common that few are ignorant of the details. Good meals, all the fresh air in the world, unlimited walking facilities, movies, dancing, deck sports—all were ours during those four days that we steadily approached a warmer clime. On Tuesday morning, the white uniforms of the officers prepared us for what we might expect in tropical clothing on Wednesday. As we rounded Diamond Head Wednesday afternoon, steam launches of various sizes were seen approaching. Last, but not least, was a harbor tug bringing a reception committee with numerous lei (wreaths of welcome, thrown around the necks of visitors to Hawaii) to welcome the twenty women champion swimmers coming to the national swimming meet at Honolulu. As the boat drew into shallow water, many natives swam along and dove for coins, usually caught a few feet under water and stored in the mouth.

The return by sea was just as pleasant, but as uneventful, as the outward voyage, perhaps even more so, as only four different films are taken each voyage and as we had seen three of these on the trip out, there was but one new one to be seen on the way back. Also certain deck amusements palled slightly. On the other hand, the deck games were even more attractive and a lot of deck tennis was played.

Friday on the return trip was to prove what T A T could do in a pinch. The train was 90 minutes late. Therefore, the take-off at Waynoka was at 10.10 central time instead of 8:55. The schedule called for arrival at Columbus at 7:13 eastern time. We got there on time, even though we had no favoring wind until east of Kansas City and once went to 8,000 feet to get it. Stops were curtailed and speed increased. One example is 105 minutes for 240 miles from Kansas City to St. Louis.

THEY SAY—

Excerpts from letters written by
TAT Passengers

The outstanding feature of my trip was the very high type of personnel you have succeeded in enlisting, together with the very evident effort to obtain the last word in connection with the factor of safety.

PERCY RODEN,
Care Roden Coal Company, Inc.
Yonkers, N. Y.

The excellent service, combined with the short time in which it is possible to cross the continent via the T A T system, is a guarantee for the success of your undertaking.

ARNE ANDERSON,
Brooklyn, New York.

I am convinced that T A T has a fine personnel both in the air and on the ground.

WILLIAM I. LANDAUER,
440 Park Ave.,
New York City.

While traveling over your line, I had a feeling of perfect comfort and safety and when my destination was reached, I felt an urge to continue.

H. W. CURRY,
Supt., American Zinc Oxide Co.,
Columbus, Ohio.

I assure you I am a thorough T A T enthusiast, liking nothing better than to be always able to travel T A T.

BEVERLY BAYNE,
Flushing, New York.

Just as fifteen days before, T A T had welcomed the arriving, now they sped the parting guests and their representatives saw us aboard the Airway Limited, which placed us on the North Philadelphia platform at 8:05 Saturday morning, thus ending on time a most pleasant and eventful vacation, and perhaps establishing for a short time a record for the round trip between Philadelphia and Honolulu. If speed is the end desired, the modern version of the proverb would be "Go to the air thou sluggard." Also, with slight apologies to Horace Greeley, my advice to my eastern friends, old as well as young, is "Go West by Air."

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