



MEN WITH WINGS

BASED ON THE TECHNICOLOR
PARAMOUNT PICTURE OF THE
--- SAME NAME ---

SYNOPSIS.

Peggy Ranson, 8, and her two friends, Scott Barnes, nephew of Hiram F. Jenkins, newspaper editor, and Pat Falconer, son of a wealthy banker, both 10, have a mutual interest—aviation. When her father, Nick Ranson, quits his job on the newspaper after the Wright brothers have flown for the first time on December 17, 1903, to build his own aeroplane, their enthusiasm mounts. They build a kite in which Peggy flies and crashes. This is a small setback to their dreams, dwarfed even more when Peggy's father is killed when his plane dives to the ground. Scott and Pat console Peggy.

CHAPTER III.

IN spite of the death of Nick Ranson, the enthusiasm which Peggy, Scott and Pat had for flying continued to grow. The years from 1904 until 1914 were eventful ones in aviation. At Los Angeles, the first successful meet was held. Blériot flew the English Channel. Galbraith P. Rodgers crossed the United States. Eugene Ely landed and took off from a battleship. Louis Paulhan flew cross-country from London to Manchester, in England. Aeroplane speed approached one hundred miles an hour. Everyone, everywhere, was discussing the fact that man had wings—and was wondering how good they were.

In fact, aeroplanes had become so practical that they were being considered as implements of war. Several of the larger countries of the world had a hundred or more ships, while the United States had but twenty-five. A drive was made in Congress to secure the princely sum of 300,000 dollars to buy more equipment, the plea being made that in America, where the first powered flight by man in a heavier-than-air machine had been made, the pioneering spirit was being lost and that interest was lagging.

Peggy, Scott and Pat were not among the laggards. As Congress considered vast expenditures, they were scraping together small sums to buy material for their latest ship, a trim monoplane designed by Scott, and were working on it night and day.

The trio still worked in the Ranson shed, with the models which Nick Ranson had left behind him to inspire them and guide them. There were a few added gadgets, including a wind tunnel in which they tested models to see how airworthy they were. The new plane was

nearly completed one night. Peggy sewed wings while Scott urged Pat to keep turning the fan at the end of the tunnel as he tested a small model.

"She'll be assembled tomorrow," said Scott, finally, indicating the sleek little ship.

"And I'll fly her day after tomorrow—if it'll fly," said Pat, brightening at the news.

"Don't worry about that," Scott told him. "I've failed twice—but I've quit guessing. I know what it'll do."

"Don't tell us," admonished Peggy. "Let us see for ourselves."

"I wish your father could be here to see it," Pat said. "He'd be having more fun than any of us. If he hadn't had to pioneer—to die—if he could have had that wind tunnel to show him what it's showing us, he would be here."

They worked silently, after that, unmindful that Martha Ranson, Peggy's mother, listened at the door with mingled emotions—the thrill of their enthusiasm and their apprehension she felt when memory brought back to her the picture of Nick Ranson's tragic death.

They were unmindful, too, of time. They were feverishly excited as they worked far into the night, started again early the next morning, and that day hurried into the next. Finally they got the white monoplane to a field, on the outskirts of Underwood.

Scott, true to his promise, let Pat taxi about the plain, get the feel of the ship and its controls, finally rise into the air. Then Scott took them. Slowly but surely they mastered the bird of their creation.

Finally, they were ready for the most important thing of all—the speed tests. Their control of the ship perfected, they marked off a course, measured it. Pat got into the ship, checked the motor and warmed it thoroughly. He made sure that the stop watch, hung around his neck on a chain, was in proper working order. Then he took off gracefully. He climbed for some distance, banked to put himself into position for the course, dived, levelled off at a hundred feet. Frightened cattle raced for cover. On a nearby road horses drawing a surrey bolted.

Peggy and Scott stood on the ground near the first course marker, their heads up, their eyes shining. Peggy's hands, scarred from sewing on the wing covers, were clasped as if in prayer. So fascinated were

they in the performance of the little craft that they were unmindful of the automobile that skidded to a stop on the road which ran beside the field. They didn't see that almost before it stopped rolling the driver was out of his seat and that he hurried across the field to them.

The man stumbled, bumped against Peggy.

"Scuse me," he mumbled, absently.

Peggy didn't look at him.

Pat raced off the course, banked, returned to his original position, repeated his level dash over the field. Then he turned once more, idled his motor and flew in for a perfect landing on the rough, bumpy pasture. Peggy and Scott ran to the plane as fast as they could go. Each grabbed a wing tip and helped steer the little ship to a stop. The stranger joined in, helping to swing the tail, but still wasn't noticed.

"She flew like a dream!" Pat yelled from the cockpit.

"When you see it in the air," Peggy called, "you realise how pretty it is!"

"Does the tail assembly still flutter when she's wide open?" asked Scott tensely.

Pat leaped to the ground.

"Nope—she's tight as a drum

now," he reported. He passed the stop watch to Scott, who calculated rapidly with pencil and paper. The others waited breathlessly as he stared at his figures.

"Ninety-six miles an hour!" he gasped. "We can break the world's speed record! We've broken it!"

He looked up, and for the first time saw the stranger, who was now climbing into the cockpit of the plane. He nudged Pat, who, in turn, nudged Peggy. All looked, puzzled, at the interloper. Suddenly, as if conscious of what he was doing and their scrutiny, he turned. He jumped down, hurried to them, his face red with embarrassment.

"I—beg your pardon," he faltered. "I should have introduced myself. I'm J. A. Nolan. I build planes."

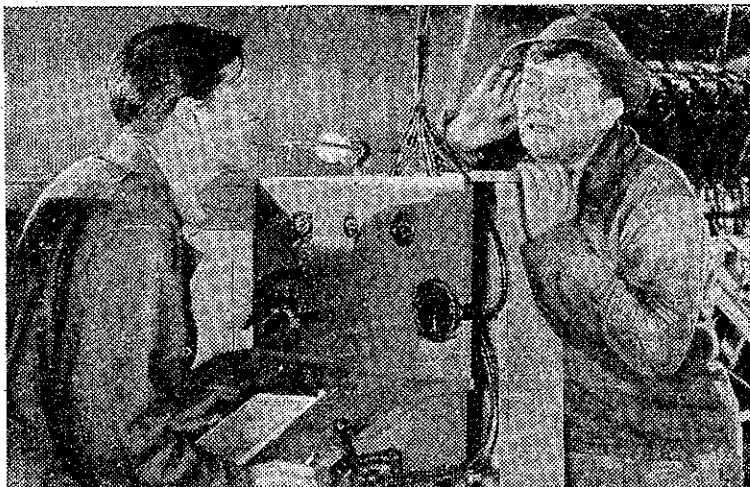
"Not the Nolan!" exclaimed Scott, awe in his voice. He immediately introduced the others and himself.

"Where'd you get the idea for that fuselage—that cantilever wing—that motor cowl?" Nolan asked Scott.

"He thought them up," Peggy replied, proudly. "He had a year at Massachusetts Institute of Technology."

Nolan turned to Scott.

"Look here, Barnes!" he snapped.



"Scott spent all his time in the drafting-room, drawing his plans, building his models and testing them in the wind tunnel. One of the first friends he made was Joe Gibbs, huge, easy-going able mechanic who had a strange ability to be efficient though awkward." (Ray Milland and Andy Devine in a scene from "Men With Wings.")

"How'd you like to go to work for me—designing aeroplanes?"

"Will you hire Pat—Mr. Falconer?" Scott asked.

"Yes," Nolan agreed.

"Then I'd like the job," Scott decided.

Nolan asked to fly the monoplane. Pat and Scott gave him permission. When he landed he reported that he had confirmed his snap judgment made when driving by the field quite by chance—that it was the fastest and most practical thing with wings he had ever seen. Then, after making arrangements for Pat and Scott to come to work, he left the field.

Scott, now a newspaper reporter, Pat and Peggy hurried to the offices of the Underwood Daily Record and informed Hiram Jenkins that Underwood now was the home of the fastest aeroplane in the world. They told him, also, that Nolan had given Pat and Scott jobs, and that Scott was resigning his position with the newspaper.

"I'll not stand in your way," Hiram said. "How about you?" he demanded, eyeing Peggy.

"My part of it is over, I guess," she answered.

"You can start learnin' to cook, now," Hiram suggested.

"I'm afraid so," she said, glumly.

Hank Rinebow, the city editor, entered Hiram's office and blurted something about a European war story.

"Shut up!" Hiram stormed. "Scott has the world's fastest aeroplane, he quits, Scott and Pat have jobs, and I've got to write the story."

He began scrawling on a piece of paper, looked up, saw the trio standing awkwardly watching him. He stopped writing. A soft, rather shy expression crossed his face. Then, abruptly, he stiffened, banged his fist down on his desk, demanded:

"Well—what're you hangin' around here for? You ain't in the newspaper business!"

Slightly abashed, Scott looked at Pat, signalled toward the door. The trio filed out, leaving Hiram with Rinebow.

Hiram paid no attention to his city editor for a while, continuing to write. Then he looked up.

"How much time have we got before we go to press?" he demanded.

"Twenty minutes," Hank replied. "But we got to bust up the front page."

"Why?" asked Hiram.

(Continued on next page.)