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**Ohio State Engineer**

**Title:** Learning to Fly at Port Columbus

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**Issue Date:** May-1930

**Publisher:** Ohio State University, College of Engineering

**Citation:** Ohio State Engineer, vol. 13, no. 7 (May, 1930), 10, 26-28.

**URI:** <http://hdl.handle.net/1811/34700>

**Appears in Collections:** [Ohio State Engineer: Volume 13, no. 7 \(May, 1930\)](#)

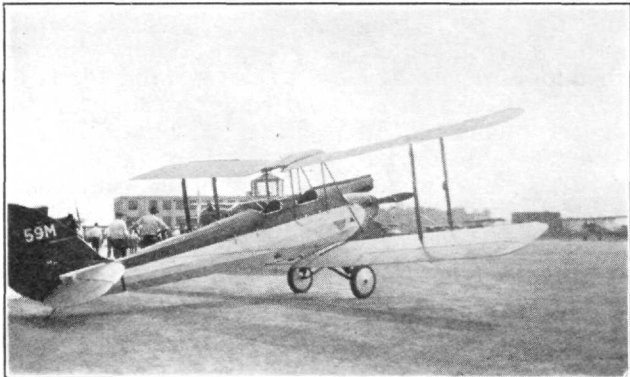
## LEARNING TO FLY AT PORT COLUMBUS

By ROBERT M. EWING, M.E. 2

Everyone who visits Port Columbus speaks of it as one of the most beautiful airports he has ever seen and the well-informed say that when completed it will rank among the very finest in the world. Situated six miles east of Broad and High on the Pennsylvania and the B. & O. lines, Port Columbus occupies 537.27 acres. It is owned and operated by the City of Columbus and is the eastern air terminus of the T.A.T.-Maddux transcontinental airlines. One of the principal reasons for Port Columbus being spoken of as beautiful is the fact that all buildings are built to uniform specifications, thereby doing away with wooden shacks and tin hangars. All structures on the field are built of yellow brick and present a uniform appearance.

The Curtiss-Wright school at Port Columbus is one of the nine accredited transport schools in the country. The manager of the base is Lieut. Frank M. McKee, formerly commander of all U. S. Lighter-than-air Service and one of the few persons in the country today who hold three licenses, F. A. I. license, pilot's license for heavier-than-air craft, dirigibles, and free balloons, in addition to Department of Commerce Transport License for Airplanes. Capt. Grant C. Melvin, who is operations manager for this base, is a former student of Ohio State and a war flyer. Lieut. Samuel H. Sharp, who is in charge of schools at this base, learned to fly in 1913 and is now a member of the "Early Birds," membership in which is considered a great honor. The chief instructor in the ground school is Professor Karl Stinson of our own Mechanical Engineering department and he is assisted by Professor Lutzenberger of the Engineering Drawing department. Ohio State is also represented on the staff by two former students, J. B. Medaris, sales manager for this area, and Robert Mathews, local school sales manager. All of the flying instructors are transport pilots with at least 1500 hours in the air and are graduates of Curtiss-Wright Instructors School at Detroit.

There are three courses offered by the school; namely, the Private Pilot's Course, the Commercial Pilot's Course, and the Transport Pilot's Course. The Ground School course is included in each of these courses but it may be taken alone if so desired. The Private Pilot's course includes



D. H. "Gipsy Moth"



Curtiss "Fledgling"

ten hours of dual control work and ten hours of supervised solo. At the end of the course the student is qualified to take the tests for a government license to operate planes for a non-commercial purpose. In this course instruction is given in not more than three different types of ships, all primary training being done in the two-place Curtiss "Fledgling" which was designed for the purpose. After having flown a while the student is allowed to take up a D. H. Moth which is of the same general type as the "Fledgling" but smaller. The OX-Robin is also used. The cost of this course is \$600, which includes the ground work.

The Commercial Pilot's course, which qualifies the student to take the government tests for a Limited Commercial License, covers fifty hours of flying and advanced ground schools and laboratory work. The flying training in this course goes on from simple maneuvers to cross country flying and aerobatics. It takes from three to six months to complete the course and costs the student \$1300.

The third course given by the school is the Transport Pilot's course and prepares the student to take the examination for the highest government license, that of Transport Pilot. With this license a flyer may carry passengers for pay and do any kind of flying permitted by law. The course covers a period of from eight to eighteen months and includes two hundred hours of flying, advanced ground school and lab work. The flying hours are spent in advanced dual control work and in night flying, blind flying, and cross-country flights. All different types of ships are used from the small open jobs and OX-Robins up to the large cabin jobs carrying a larger number of passengers. In this course every phase of flying is covered thoroughly and carefully and the student, upon graduation, should be qualified for any flying position. The cost of this course is \$4500.

While the ground school work is given with each of the flying courses it can be taken alone at a cost of \$50. It covers elementary design, repair, construction, and all ground phases of aviation more or less thoroughly.

The Curtiss-Wright equipment at Port Colum-

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bus comprises about fifteen planes. There are "Fledgings," "Moths," both OX and Challenger motored Robins, Cessnas, and a six-place Travel Air cabin monoplane powered with a 300 h.p. Wright Whirlwind motor. The ground force of mechanics, under the supervision of Chief Mechanic Joe Allen, includes approximately fifteen men.

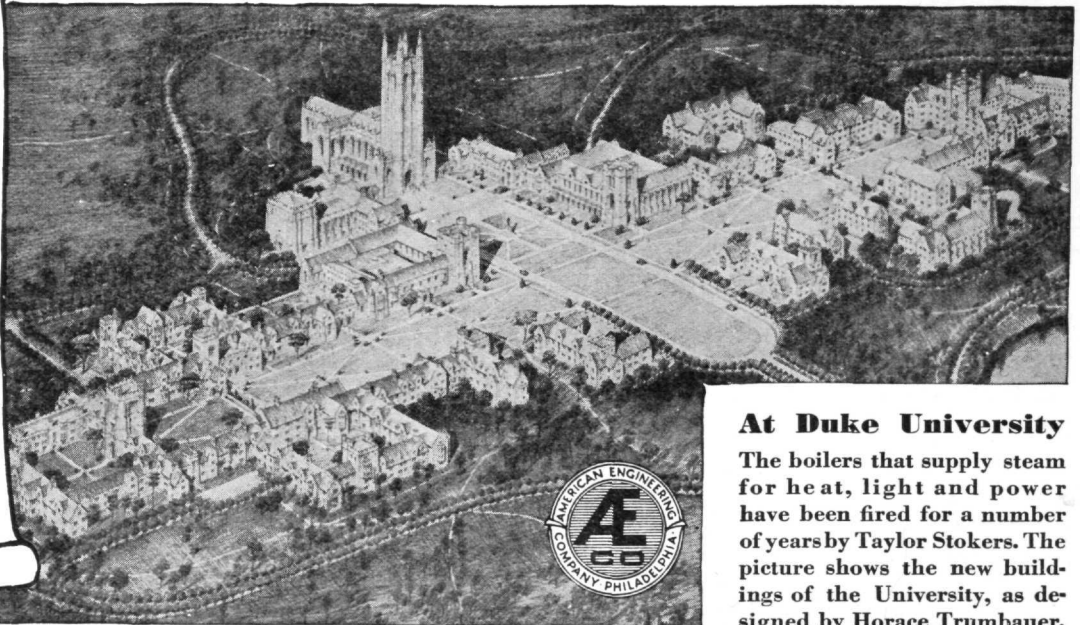
Another phase of the work done at the base is the flying service. This includes passenger hopping and chartered flights. Every Sunday and holiday several planes may be seen flying about over the city with sightseeing passengers. Visiting planes can get gas and oil from the hangar and mechanics are ready to service their planes. Telegrams are sent for visiting flyers and train reservations made. In fact every type of service that can be rendered to flyers and travelers is afforded here at the port.

The inside of the Curtiss-Wright hangar is very interesting. Always clean, with planes neatly parked along the sides, the hangar presents a pleasing spectacle to the visitor. But the biggest surprise comes when you are ushered into the "lean-to" at the side of the hangar. On the first floor is a waiting room which surpasses any ordinary waiting room, in beauty, comfort, and hominess. Except for its size it reminds one of the lobby of a fashionable hotel with its comfortable chairs and covered floor. On the second floor are the offices which, except for the noises

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of the planes outside, might be in one of the downtown office buildings. In back of these offices are two large classrooms for the ground school, between them a small lab equipped with several different types of airplane engines, while at the extreme rear is a dormitory for out-of-town students. All of these rooms are well lighted.

Columbus should be proud of its airport and of the people who have made it what it is and who are helping it grow. It is a very interesting place to visit even for one not particularly interested in aviation, while for those who are it is truly a revelation in airports.

AUTHOR'S NOTE.—The author wishes to acknowledge the help he received from Mr. Robert Mathews in providing the necessary details for this article.

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