FILE TITLE: 1st Fighter Pilot - Former Sgt Dean Ivan Lamb

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Dean Ivan Lamb was a flier and a soldier of fortune. His life was a colorful adventure shadowed by sadness. He reached out and touched the world with a vibrant force to be all the things men long to be, and in doing so, he accomplished a string of "firsts" that may never again be equaled by one person.

It was in northern Mexico, on an afternoon early in 1911—only eight years after the Wright Brothers' famous invention was hatched at Kitty Hawk. Lamb was flying low over the hilly Sonora terrain in his Curtiss "pusher-type" plane, so low that he could see the startled faces of the Mexican field workers as they turned to stare up at the strangest of sights: a bicycle with wings, a box kite being pushed through the sky by a giant roaring egg beater.

Lamb had a mission to perform. Detained by Pancho Villa, himself, his assignment was to locate the Mexican Federal Army's one-plane air force and destroy it.

The Federalists' plane had been a barn under Pancho Villa's saddle for almost two months now. It was exposing his rebel strongholds from the air and taking pot shots at his men. Lamb, a cattle puncher in Arizona with flying experience, heard that the famous bandit general (Continued on page 112)
The world's first fighter pilot (Continued from page 39)

was looking for a pilot. He turned up for the job, a wiry string bean of a youth, barely twenty years old.

The bull-like Pancho Villa said laughingly, sizing up the youngster. His laugh was deep and guttural and it was owing job the laughter of his battle-worn band of men who had gathered round to watch the fun.

Lamb stood. He stood straight, but he felt sick and humiliated.

"You are so skinny that the wind, she would blow you away," the revolutionist fhadbi Lamb an unexpected shove that sent him sprawling into the dust.

The men mated.

No sooner had Lamb hit the ground than he sprang to his feet, brought his fist up to his band and cried: "Revolutionists, the Lamb hit Pacho in the mouth with a blow that numbed his hand. A thick trickle of blood ran from his general's lip, for a moment there was no sound whatsoever. Then the stillness was cut by the sharp metallic belling of rifles, and a dozen or more guns were trained on the young American.

"Now," said Pancho, "Basta." He wiped the blood from his mouth with the back of his hand, smearing dirt into the cut. He looked at Lamb, "All right," he said, "You are a fine man, and a fighter, too. That is good. The job is yours." He turned on his heel and walked away fighters, taking one of his men to take Lamb to the plane.

That was the way Dean Ivan Lamb got his commission. The word was launched into him adventures that spanned his lifetime. Al- though Pancho Villa's force prided never allowed him, no, said Lamb, he has never been to the colossus of the world, it was known that a fly racer has been in the cockpits of the world. Lamb had taken his plane up for three consecutive days without spotting the enem fighters. He searched the sky, but there was something in the air today that told him this might be the time. He looked at the rocky terrain below. He had landed here. The world might mean certain death.

A high altar of mountains spanned the horizon. The sun had not yet begun its descent from a sky that was cloudless and blue and as broad and endless as the land beneath it.

Suddenly he saw it crawling down on him from the left. His own plane was making such a racket that he hadn't heard it approach, and the noisy bird like his own. A puff of blue smoke spotted the sky and a bullet ripped through Lamb's right wing. He pulled back hard on his control stick, the plane shimmied, rose and circled. The two planes nearly collided. Lamb clawed a revolver into his hand from the leather holster strapped across his chest. Then, almost casually, he threw his arms into a lazy figure-four and aimed carefully at what he knew to be the enemy plane's most vulnerable spot—its whirling white propeller.

The two planes were now whizzing along side by side. Lamb could see the face of his opponent, a broad man with a large, black mustache that seemed almost comical matched with his goggles.

Lamb was greeted with another volley of shots. Lamb retaliated, and within less than five minutes both guns were empty. The two planes pulled apart as suddenly as they had met.

History's first "dog fight" had ended in a draw.

The sky above Somera was silent after that. The revolutionists were pleased be- cause, although Lamb had not destroyed the Federalist plane, he had frightened it off and it never bothered them again.

Lamb returned to Arizona one thousand pesos richer than he had left and with a passion for flying that would never leave him. He went back to cattle raising, but he was restless. Life without flying frustra- tated him. He felt lost on the ground.

At that time, political conflict was turn- ing South America into a battlefield. So Lamb, hired by the storm, once again left Arizona. He was after two things, money, and adventure, and because he could, he found plenty of both.

He quelled two minor revolts from the air, and, in the next few years, served as chief of staff for armies in Nicaragua, Colombia, Honduras and Paraguay.

He proved, however, to be as reckless with money as he was with his life. When his own country entered World War I and he decided to return home (nothing less than a war could have lured him back), Lamb was virtually penniless.

He joined the army. Already a skilled and seasoned flier, Lamb received an immediate commission and was at-

To Ron Bailey With all best wishes for happy landings. Always Dean Lamb

ached to the Royal Air Force in Britain. While piloting a bi-plane fighter, he shot down the first plane, a German Gotha bomber, ever to fall on British soil.

He hated England and its weather, but he was flying. That was all that mattered.

Shortly after the Armistice was signed and the world set about rebuilding what war had torn down, Lamb returned to the United States. He was a hero, but the world was sick of war. It wanted to forget fighting and fighting. It wanted peace and prosperity. It had returned to "normal" and back to barn-storming, ra- lars a hop. He thrilled and fought friend with the dreaded aerial ballot. It was all play and fun.

Once again, he turned southwest, wrote two more pages in aviation's his- tory. He became the first pilot to do a hop from the treacherously high Andes in a biplane and the first aviator to fly nonstop across Central America.

The year 1925 found Dean Ivan Lamb back in his own country, working for Uncle Sam. And once again he undertook another "first" in aviation's history. He headed the first scheduled air-mail flight on an overnight route previously considered impossible, from New York to Chicago.

The Lufthansa was sunk; Hitler raped Poland; the United States entered World War II; the globe was engulfed in war and the war in the air.

Lamb returned to his native Arizona, and in 1933, as a colonel in the United States Air Force, he was awarded the Medal of Honor as World War II's greatest aviator.

He died in Tucson, Arizona, in 1945, but his spirit lives on in the lectures and stories of a man who has left a mark on the course of history and aviation.

For more on Dean Ivan Lamb and his life and accomplishments, visit our website at www.deanivanlamb.com.

* * *

The story of Dean Ivan Lamb is a testament to the power of dreams and determination. From humble beginnings in Arizona, he rose to become one of the greatest aviators in history. His story is one of perseverance, courage, and dedication to his passion for flight. Lamb's legacy continues to inspire generations of aviators and aviation enthusiasts around the world.
edly the complete list will disclose another score of British aces.

RECORD OF ITALIAN Aces

Maj. Baracca (killed June 21, 1918).

Lieu. Brancati.

Lieu. Ambrosio.

Capt. Piemontini.

Capt. Duce Calabria.

Lieu. Trani (killed).

Lieu. Cervi.

Lieu. Pott.

Lieu. Jerolmi.

Lieu. Battista.

Lieu. Arigoni.

Fourteen Italian aces have totalled 193 victories.

EIGHT BELGIAN Aces, 60 Victories

Adjt. Coussens.

Lieu. Thiry (killed February 12, 1918).

Lieu. Stih (killed).

Lieu. Blindt.

Lieu. Joffe.

Adjt. Masurel.

RUSSIAN Aces

Capt. Krouchkof.

Capt. Neustrom (killed June 19, 1917).

Lieu. Pacholtschou.

LIVING HUN Aces TOTAL 747 Planes

Thirty-six German and four Austrian aces, living total 747 aeroplanes.

Lieu. Max Buckler.

Lieu. Schreck.

Lieu. Kutscher.

Lieu. Sperch.

Lieu. von Blay.

Lieu. von der Goltz.

Lieu. von Volfell.

Lieu. von der Goltz.

Lieu. von Blay.

Capt. Rüttimann.

Capt. Kirstein.

Capt. Romany.

Capt. Uer.

Lieu. Wildhoch.

Lieu. de Vilmorin.

Lieu. de Vilmorin.

Lieu. de Vilmorin.

Capt. Mann.

Capt. Harald.

Capt. Brauer.

Capt. Brauer.

Capt. Hirth.

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smokers, or engineers. They picked up what knowledge they
had about their assigned weapons and shooting techniques on their own.

The situation would not always be, and training in weapons and in firing
them would rapidly progress as later gunners mastered increasingly
complicated turrets, gunsights and, eventually, with the B-29, a com-
puterized, remotely controlled, integrated fire control system.

In the beginning, flexible aerial gunnery was quite primitive. With the
advent of flying machines, military men, quite naturally, began thinking of
different ways to employ airplanes in battle. Just nine years after the
Wright brothers' first flight a machine gun was first carried aloft and fired.

It was at College Park, Maryland on June 7, 1912 that a Lewis gun
cradled between the knees and feet of Capt. Charles De F. Chandler
became airborne in the open-air right seat of a Wright Model B biplane
piloted by Lt. De Witt Milling. The Wright biplane struggled to a height
of 300 feet, whereupon Capt. Chandler fired the full drum of 47 bullets at
a canvas sheet on the ground, scoring 129 hits. Not too bad a beginning
for Chandler, the world's first aerial machine gunner!

The Lewis gun was to become a standard weapon in many of the
worlds' air forces for the next 30 years. It was developed by another
American, Col. Isaac N. Lewis. He made improvements in the gun,
lightening it for airborne use. The gun was also adopted by the U.S. Army
for ground use as well. The Lewis fired .303-inch caliber rounds from
a 47-round drum. It weighed 26 pounds and had a rate of fire of 560 rounds
per minute.

A year earlier, in 1911, saw what was possibly the first aerial battle
using "flexible gunnery": that is flexible arms and flexible hards brand-
dishing pistols. And the honor of being on of the first participants in this
aerial battle goes to another American, 22-year-old Dean Ivan Lamb.
His opponent was a Mexican Army pilot, who actually fired the first shot.

It happened this way. The Mexican Army in trying to subdue the legendary
bandit Pancho Villa had decided to employ an airplane in its chase. They
shipped by rail from Mexico City to the northern state of Sonora a Curtiss
pusher biplane. To counter the threat, Villa acquired a Curtiss pusher
biplane of his own and was looking for someone to fly it. Lamb, working
by fly, decided to apply.

When he located Villa, Lamb was in for a disappointment. Villa
said Lamb's slight physical build, saying that he was so skinny that
the wind would blow him away. Villa gave Lamb a shove that sprawled
the youngster in front of the rest of the laughing bandidos.

Lamb jumped up and threw a punch at Villa's face hitting him in the
mouth and drawing blood. He could hear the bolts of the men's rifles click
into battery. All was still.

Then Villa spoke. He said to Lamb that he was a fighter as well as a
pilot and that he had the job.

For three days Lamb patrolled the deserts of Sonora in his pusher,
without sighting the other plane. On the fourth day, while cruising along
enjoying the beauty of scenery from the air, he suddenly saw the other
plane bearing down on him from his left. While he looked there was a puff
of smoke and something thudded into his right wing. He quickly turned
toward the other craft, barely missing it. Then he pulled his own revolver
and fired a round at the attacker. It missed.

Now the two planes were flying beside each other, line abreast. The
Mexican pilot gave a little wave of his hand, then fired a few more rounds
at Lamb. Lamb retaliated. In a few minutes both flyers had exhausted
their ammunition and each went his own way. It had been history's first
aerial battle and it had ended in a draw. While Lamb could not claim a victory,
he had done the job Pancho Villa had hired him to do. The Mexican Army
Curtiss never again flew in seach of the bandit.

For Lamb it was only the beginning of a life of aerial adventure. He
found he could sell his flying and fighting skills in other places, as well. In
South America he took part in putting down two minor revolutions and
served with the armies of Honduras, Paraguay, Nicaragua and Colombia.
When the United States entered World War I he returned and was
accepted as a pilot by the Army. As a second lieutenant he was attached
to the Royal Flying Corps in England and is said to have been the first to
down a plane over Britain, a German Gotha bomber.

Following the war he barnstormed, then it was back to South America,
where he had several flying "firsts." Back in the U.S. Lamb was one of the
early mail flyers, and flew in various other jobs for the next 16 years.
When World War II came along, he managed to reenter the Army Air
Forces, and flew as a cargo pilot in India and China. He retired as a
colonel in 1953.

The honor of being the first to down an enemy by gunfire goes to a
young English pilot named F. Vessy Holt, who, like Lamb, used a pistol.
It was early in the first World War. Holt was on a routine reconnaissance
mission, which is mainly what airplanes had been used for up to that
The first parachute descent by a woman from an aeroplane was made by the 18-year-old American girl, Georgia ("Tiny") Broadwick who, using an 11 lb (5 kg) silk parachute, jumped from an aircraft flown by Glenn Martin at about 2000 ft (609 m) over Griffith Field, Los Angeles, California, on 21 June 1913.

The first major British competition for seaplanes was the Daily Mail Hydro-Aéroplane Trial, started on 16 August 1913. The regulations stated a specified course round Britain, involving a distance to be flown of 1140 miles (1830 km) by an all-British aircraft before 10 August. Four aircraft were entered, but Samuel Cody was killed in a crash at Lauffin's Plain on 7 August. F.K. McClean withdrew his Short S.6 due to engine trouble, and the Radley-England Waterplane was scratched for the same reason. This left Harry Hawker, accompanied by his mechanic H.A. Kauper, as the only contender. He left the water at Southampton at 11.47h, in a Sopwith three-seater tractor biplane which was powered by a 200 hp Green six-cylinder inline engine. The route was from Southampton via Ramsgate, Yarmouth, Scarborough, Aberdeen, Cromarty, Oban, Dublin, Falmouth, and back to Southampton. He then flew round the course as far as Dublin when, just before alighting on the water, his foot slipped off the rudder bar, and the aircraft struck the water and broke up. The Daily Mail prize of £5000 was not awarded, but Hawker received £1000 as consolation.

The first pilot in the world to perform a loop was Lt Nesterov of the Imperial Russian Army who, flying a Nieuport Type IV monoplane, performed the manoeuvre at Kiev on 27 August 1913.

The first pilot to fly inverted in sustained flight (as distinct from becoming inverted during the course of the looping manoeuvre) was Adolphe Pégoud who, on 21 September 1913, flew a Bleriot monoplane inverted at 650 ft, France. Notwithstanding the above definition, Pégoud's manoeuvre involved two 'halves' of a loop, in that he assumed the inverted position by means of a half-loop, and after sustained inverted flight recovered by means of a 'pull-through'. He thus did not respect to a roll or half-roll, which manoeuvre had not apparently been achieved at this time. As a means of acclimatising himself for the ordeal of inverted flight, Pégoud had had his Bleriot mounted inverted upon trestles and had remained strapped in the cockpit for periods of up to 20 min at a time.

The first air crossing of the Mediterranean was achieved on 3 August 1913 by a Morane-Saulnier monoplane piloted by Roland Garros, who flew 453 miles (730 km) from Saint-Raphaël, France, to Bizerte, Tunisia, in 7 h 53 min.

The first 'over 200 km/h' world speed record was set by Frenchman Maurice Prévost in the Depé-dusén 'monocoque' of 1913 at Reims on 29 September 1913, at 126.3 mph (203.3 km/h). This was officially the fastest aircraft prior to the First World War, as no further records were set until 1918.

The first ever aerial combat between aircraft took place in November 1913, when, over Mexico, an aeroplane piloted by Philip Rader in support of General Huerta exchanged pistol shots with one flown by Dean Lamb operating with the forces of Venustiano Carranza.

The first flight from France to Egypt was accomplished by Jules Vindére in a Bleriot powered by an 80 hp Gnôme engine, between 29 November and 29 December 1913. Setting out from Nancy, France, his route was via Würzburg, Prague, Vienna, Belgrade, Sofia, Constantinople, Tripoli (Syria), Jaffa and Cairo.

### Progressive world absolute speed records achieved by man in the atmosphere

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location of achievement</th>
<th>Aircraft Type</th>
<th>Speed (mph)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 Oct 1910</td>
<td>Long Island, USA</td>
<td>Curtiss Plane</td>
<td>117.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Jul 1912</td>
<td>Chicago, Illinois, USA</td>
<td>Curtiss Plane</td>
<td>117.72</td>
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<td>22 Feb 1912</td>
<td>France</td>
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<td>12 Apr 1912</td>
<td>France</td>
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<td>12 June 1911</td>
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<td>16 Jun 1911</td>
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<td>16 Jun 1911</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Curtiss Plane</td>
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### Non-aviation inventions of the period

- **Tracked agricultural tractor**: Produced by the American Holt Manufacturing Company and steam powered, in 1906.
- **Talking motion film**: Sound-on-film process was patented by Eugène-Augustin Laussot in 1906.
- **Geiger counter**: The work of the German physicist Hans Geiger to measure radiation, dating from 1908.
Colonel Recalls Air Combat
In Box Kite-Winged ‘Bicycle’

By RON BUTLER

DAVID MONTTHAN AFB, Ariz.—A veteran of the world's first aerial combat recently visited DASMONTTHAN Col. Ivan Lamb recalled flying aerial warfare over 40 years ago in a plane that looked like a bicycle with boxkite wings.

In 1911, Lamb, American, and his “soilder of fortune” took off from northern Sonora in Mexico. He was "Chief" of the Mexican Revolution's Army's one-plane air force, the first of its kind in the world.

During World War II, Lamb flew for the British Royal Flying Corps, in 1917. When a squadron of German Gotha bombers attacked London, Lamb was shot down which led to the first plane to be shot down over England.

After the armistice, Col. Lamb flew the first scheduled air mail route which operated between New York and Chicago. He made the first flight across central America, now known as revolutionaries, and was among the first to fly from London to and from Andes, Ecuador.

During the war, he served as an officer with the Flying Tigers in India, China. Then in 1953, Col. Lamb retired.