

BEACHEY FALLS TO DEATH WHEN WINGS CRUMPLE

**Aviator's Spectacular Career
Comes to End Before Hor-
rified Thousands.**

**PLUNGES 3,000 FEET
INTO BAY AT FRISCO**

**Attempts Perpendicular Drop
in Monoplane and Feat
Is Fatal.**

SAN FRANCISCO, March 14.—Lincoln Beachey, the aviator, was killed while making an exhibition flight at the Panama-Pacific exposition today. At an altitude of 3,000 feet, Beachey began a sharp descent. The wings of his aeroplane collapsed and the machine plunged into San Francisco bay. The body was recovered by divers.

Beachey's spectacular career came to its end in the presence of thousands of horror-stricken spectators, visitors at the Panama-Pacific exposition. Beachey was completing his second flight of the day when the accident occurred. Having previously electrified the crowd with a series of aerial somersaults, the airman sought to add an additional thrill by making one of the most sensational perpendicular drops which usually featured his flights.

The fatal fall is attributed to the fact that today, for the first time, Beachey attempted his sensational aerial accomplishments in a monoplane.

Crowd Exceptionally Large.

An exceptionally large crowd had been attracted to the fair grounds when they found he would undertake the same breath-taking stunts in the machine with one set of planes instead of the biplane.

On the first flight all went well and the aviator's familiar tricks were indulged in with the exception of the perpendicular drop. This Beachey had saved for the climax. It proved too much of a strain for the frame of the monoplane.

The machine was at an altitude of 3,000 feet when Beachey shut off his power. For several thousand feet it

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dropped head on for the earth and then the aviator grasped his control levers to adjust the planes for the graceful descent which had characterized his previous flights.

When the machine checked its perpendicular drop and straightened out in mid-air, the strain on the single tier of supporting planes proved too great. They crumpled like a collapsed umbrella, and the wrecked monoplane, whirling over and over like a wounded bird, plunged downward into San Francisco bay, narrowly missing a vessel docked at the government pier.

Splintered Fragments Seen.

A few splintered fragments of the plane showed the thousands who rushed to the water front, where the unfortunate aviator's body lay, strapped in his seat, 40 feet beneath the surface of the bay, which was brought to the surface shortly after 5 o'clock.

Divers from the Oregon, searching the inshore waters of the bay, found the crushed form of the airman, entangled in the twisted rods and torn canvas of the machine. They freed the body with axes and brought it to the surface. Hillary Beachey, a brother of the aviator, witnessed the tragedy from the deck of the United States transport Crook. The monoplane fell only a few feet away from the transport.

Beachey Was Drowned.

Beachey was still alive when he struck the water and had sustained no major injuries as a result of the fall except a broken leg, in the opinion of Dr. David E. Stafford, who examined the body at the morgue tonight.

The face, said Dr. Stafford, was discolored from choking and strangling, indicating that death was due to drowning.

Cuts on the aviator's hands were taken to indicate that he had made desperate efforts to release himself from the mesh of twisted wires and rods in which he was entangled.

When the machine fell Beachey was protected by the engine, propellers and hood of the monoplane, which struck the water first. It was pointed out, that if Beachey could have disengaged himself he probably would have managed to keep afloat until rescued.

Skillful and Daring.

Lincoln Beachey was regarded as the most skillful and daring of American aviators. He earned this reputation long before the French flyers, headed by Pegoud, began to glide through the air upside down. Beachey was in retirement when these feats were heralded and was drawn back into the game by his desire to exceed the remarkable flying of the Frenchmen.

With an aeroplane of small wing surface, he flew upside down, made spirals while head downward and looped the loop.

Beachey was born in San Francisco in September, 1887, and made his first flight in 1905 at Oakland, Cal., piloting a dirigible balloon. In 1906 he circled the capitol at Washington. He soared over New York city in July, 1907. His motor failed and the wind whirled the dirigible across the river wrecking it.

His first heavier-than-air machine, a monoplane, was wrecked at St. Paul in 1910. He made a successful flight in Los Angeles but then wrecked another flyer.

Startles the World.

May 5, 1911 he was the first man to circle the capitol in Washington in an aeroplane. He then startled the world by flying over Niagara falls. Later he won the first intercity aeroplane race in America, flying from New York to Philadelphia.

He was the most prominent figure in the 1911 Chicago aviation meet, spiraling at sharp angles.

Early in 1913 Beachey announced that he had made his last flight, asserting that he felt partly responsible for the deaths of nine aviators who had tried to emulate him. When the deeds of the daring Frenchmen were chronicled, however, he returned to the flying game. In October, 1913, at Hammondsport, N. Y., his machine swept several spectators from a roof, killing one.

Beachey boasted that 20,000,000 persons had seen him fly.

Beachey was a schoolboy when he first began to study aerial navigation. At the age of 17 he made his first flight at Idora park, Oakland, Cal., in George E. Heaton's dirigible balloon. This was in February, 1905.

An aeronaut for Capt. T. S. Baldwin, he flew at Lewis and Clark exposition at Portland, Ore., in August of the same year. These flights were not entirely successful, but he kept on trying.

Congressmen Greet Him.

In 1906 Beachey joined Roy Knabenschue, and it was during that year that he created a sensation by flying around the dome of the capitol at

Washington. The flight created so much excitement that the house of representatives, then in session, adjourned and the congressmen greeted Beachey when he alighted on the steps of the capitol.

Severing his connection with Knabenschue, Beachey built a dirigible of his own, much shorter than those of his contemporaries, and on July 25, 1907, hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers stopped their work and watched him circle above the towers of modern Manhattan. He landed in Battery park, but so great was the ovation accorded him that, to escape the crowd he was compelled to ascend again. His second flight resulted disastrously.

As he sailed over Williamsburg bridge, his motor began to miss fire and the wind carried him toward Sunken Meadows. When within 50 feet of the ground, a gust of wind whirled his gas bag around and dashed it hard against the tall steel spar on Spindle light. Beachey saved himself by throwing his arms around the pole. He was rescued by fishermen.

Continues Exhibitions.

He built another dirigible and continued his exhibition flights throughout the country.

In 1910 his interest first turned to heavier-than-air machines and he constructed a monoplane which was wrecked during a series of flights at St. Paul. His first really successful aeroplane flight was made at Los Angeles in 1911. Later he wrecked this machine, and not long afterward spoiled another at San Francisco. Glenn Curtiss, whose machines Beachey had adopted, told him he was a failure, but he persisted and on May 5, 1911, he was the first man to circle the capitol at Washington in a heavier-than-air machine.

Beachey became famous overnight after his second flight around the dome of the capitol and the nation gasped when on June 27 he circled over Niagara Falls, swooping down out of the mist and under the spans of the upper steel bridge. He flew on down the gorge, and almost to the whirlpool. It was the first time an aviator had dared to cut through the mists above the whirling currents, which were believed to spell death to the most daring of adventurers.

Gymnastics in the Air.

The week following Beachey won the first intercity aeroplane race held on this continent, flying from New York to Philadelphia in 2 hours, 22 seconds. Later in the month he was the most prominent figure in a notable aviation meet at Chicago. He spiraled at such angles that persons thought he was falling and telephoned for ambulances. He played leap-frog over the engines in Grant Park and he drove automobiles on Michigan boulevard into the side streets and onto the sidewalks. He spun his landing wheels on the planes of another machine and was fined for violating the aerial code. At the same meet he established an American altitude record by climbing heavenward until his fuel was exhausted and then volplaning 11,000 feet to earth.

Early in the spring of 1913 Beachey announced he had made his last flight. He asserted he believed himself partly responsible for the deaths of nine aviators who tried to emulate "my foolishly daring exploits."

Constructs Special Biplane.

But later in the year, when American newspapers began to chronicle the feats of the Frenchman, Pegoud, Beachey constructed a biplane only 21 feet wide, with double beams and wires to stand the extra strain and said he was going to loop-the-loop. He took his machine to California and began to practice the "stunts" which later thrilled large crowds in exhibitions he gave in many parts of the United States.