

but I did not work it. In any case the glide was very prolonged as the valley seemed to be an area of reduced sink. I went out over Bishop and back before landing yes, in the first thousand feet of one of the tremendous long runways. The clear air had fooled me in spite of all my conscientious efforts to get nearer the hangar, but at least I terminated my first flight on the airport.

This was real soaring—two hours and fifteen minutes with Golden "C" altitude on my first flight, so we happily started to calibrate the barograph. The trace was excellent but the drum had been smoked with no foil! Harland said: "Don't worry, this wasn't even a good day at Bishop."

The next three days the air was quite stable. Sunday Margaret took a high tow and was able to gain 4200 ft. but the release was too high to count for Silver "C" altitude. Monday I twice gained 3500 from low tows over Bishop but was unable to pick up any more. The Weather Bureau people insisted that a new mass of air would move in on Thursday. We hoped it would—as Friday was our scheduled day to leave. Everyone at the airport was apologizing for the weather and assuring us that this was not normal for Bishop.

Wednesday was my day to fly again since Margaret and I were taking turns, and by noon it began to look somewhat more promising. Some clouds were showing 50-75 miles away after three days of perfectly clear blue sky. In that country you can really see fabulous distances up and down the valley.

We planned low tows to shoot for Golden "C" altitude, and laid out a triangular course of 58.5 miles with one leg 25.5 miles along the crest of the mountain range from Black to White Mountain Peaks which are well-defined landmarks. This time I was carrying two barographs!

On the first tow to 5800 ft. I stayed up for forty minutes but never got above the release point. The second tow did not seem much better. I released at 6100 and dropped to 5100 before I got any sustained lift. The thermal was rather weak but after thirty minutes of real hard work I reached 9400. With this I headed for the foothills which were a good distance as we had been releasing well over Bishop in order to keep the short leg of the triangular course over the minimum of 10.6 miles. I did not get any lift over the valley as I headed for the foothills, nor while losing the next 1200 ft. as I searched the mountains. I was now down below 6000 and had to head for the airport. As I was leaving I hit a little lift so took a long shot and spiralled. It was a real hard struggle and I remember looking at my watch at 10,000. I had been up 1 hour and 25 minutes and never worked any harder flying back East.

Conditions seemed to improve as time went on and I soon had 16,500 with the outside temperature showing -5°C . This was enough for Golden "C" altitude so I headed for Black Mt. The lift was fairly well distributed and I was able to pick up altitude as needed and keep well above the top of the mountains. On the way I worked one thermal to 17,600 feet and now the temperature dropped to -8°C . After going well out over Black Mt. I turned north and headed for White Mt. with generally good lift. I

wanted some good altitude for the sharp and rugged White Mt. Peak with an elevation of 14,242 and fortunately got a beautiful thermal with 800 fpm lift taking me back up to 17,300. By this time I was getting cold as it had been 0°C or less for a long time.

The vicinity of White Mt. with its deep canyons was very rough. However, I had enough experience by now to enjoy it thoroughly. I flew back down the ridge about 10 miles and worked one more thermal to 16,500. The sun was getting low and I was really cold by now. Somehow working up and down the ridge I had lost an hour and was surprised when checking the oxygen supply to find it quite low. I had been on oxygen ever since reaching 12,000 feet.

As it turned out I left the mountains with far more altitude than needed to complete the triangular course so went clear across the valley to the eastern slope of the Sierras and then diagonally across the valley again almost to Black Mt. I flew straight through plenty of lift areas to land, having been aloft for 3 hours, 25 minutes, with 12,500 ft. gained above release, and a closed triangular course credit of 58.5 miles.

Boy, take it from me, Bishop soaring is just great, and tomorrow the weather is supposed to be really good. Well, I will let Margaret tell you about that as it is her turn to fly.

We went out to breakfast at 8:30 A. M. Thursday and already there were cumulus clouds over the Sierra Nevadas on the west side of the valley. As the morning passed they began to appear first over the valley, and then over the White Mountains on the east side of the valley. This was the day for which I had been waiting. I hoped to accomplish my Golden "C" altitude and also Silver "C" distance using the triangular course George described above. Harland was urging a bigger and better flight down the mountain range to Montgomery Peak for a goal and return of 70 miles.

We took care of our usual chores such as smoking the barographs and checking the oxygen tank. Since George had been so cold the day before I decided to be prepared with a wool shirt, gloves and foot coverings. Just after noon we took the TG-3 out on the runway.

The take-off was smooth in spite of the fairly strong wind on the ground, and we headed south, then west across the valley toward the Sierra Nevadas. In a matter of a few minutes we were in good lift and I released at 5400. For the first 500 feet up I worked to get centered in the thermal, then almost before I knew it I was climbing steadily 500-800-1000 fpm. I reached the top of the thermal, 12,000 ft., fifteen minutes after take-off and then headed for Silver Peak. My plan was to gain my Golden "C" altitude first, then head south for the first point of the Silver "C" triangular course.

I reached the foothills having lost only 1000 ft. and continued toward the peaks. At one point in my cruise I was rudely jarred, hitting my head on the top of the canopy. The cushions behind me bounced up and down and dust from the bottom of the ship swirled all around me. When the dust settled down everything was still intact, including myself. There was considerable lift over the mountains and I man-

(Continued on page 12)