

Wave in the Mt. Tom area and something had to be done about the icing problem and the turn and bank indicator. This time I made the wrong decision, but I did not realize it before I had to discontinue a wonderful cross-country flight because of darkness, with only one-half of the oxygen supply used and the sky covered with Waves. Also Larry did not know that another great day awaited him and that he would soar, with Harold Klieforth, to over 44,000 ft. in one of the Project ships.

He started first and after a while he gave me by radio the advice to fly around the lenticulars near Owens Lake and to try Boulder City. At this time he was at 35,000' on a tracking run. When John Robinson and Betsy Woodward had released in the Wave with the other Pratt-Read, Ray Parker, who had just installed an "air-conditioning hose" in my glider, towed me into the air at 13:25 PST. I felt very crowded and hot in the cockpit with all the equipment around. This time the gloves were fixed by a cord to the fly-

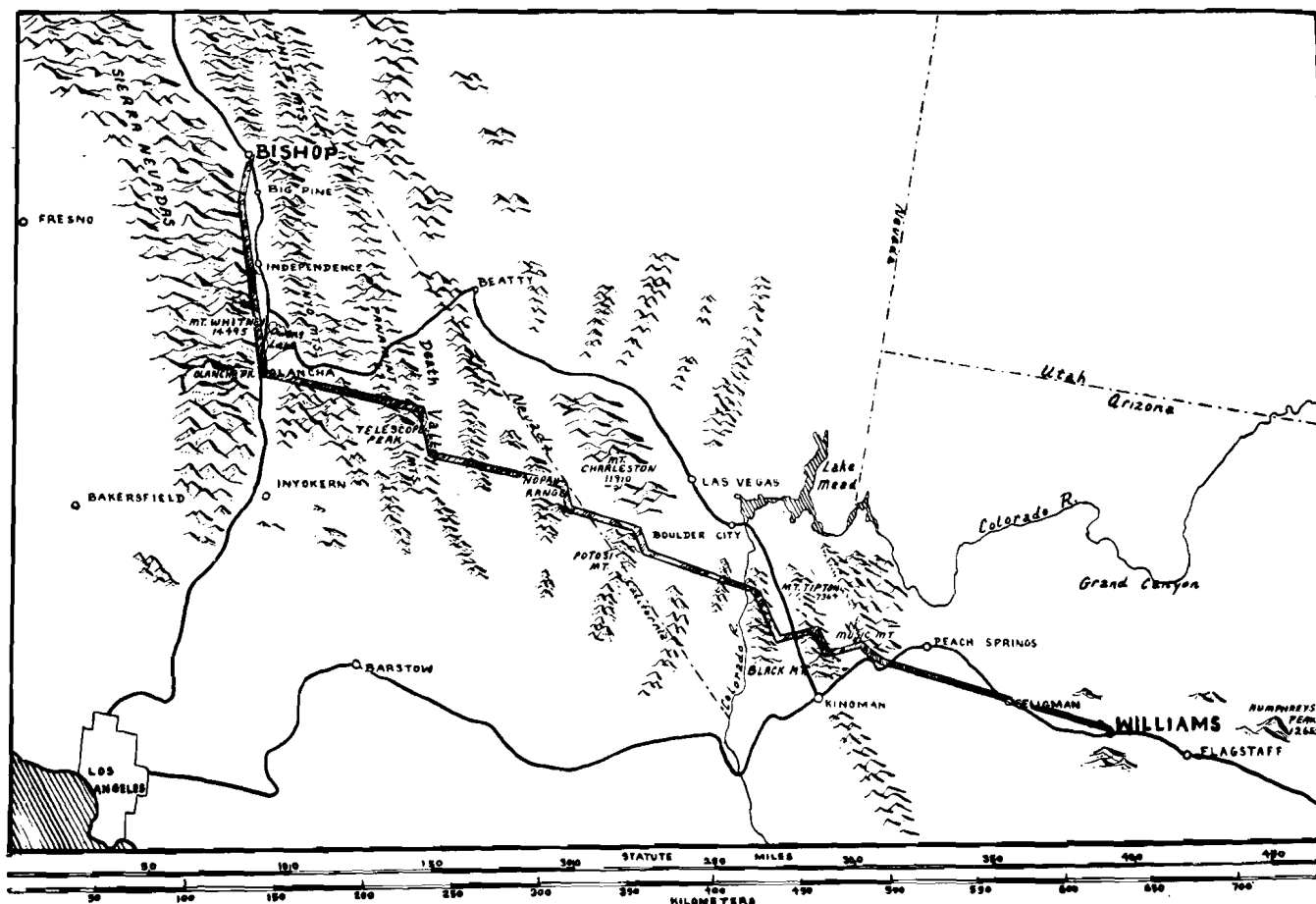
ing suit. On the 18th of December, Larry and I lost both our gloves at 40,000' in severe turbulence. The same had happened on the 18th of March.

It was one of those tows where you find the electrician's tape and the screw driver you have looked high and low for all the day, floating over your head in a negative G load. We climbed long and lost altitude in a hurry. When I finally released at 13:51 at 10,500' (3,200 m) near Big Pine, I felt like having just finished a ten mile run in a fur coat. With Ray's air-conditioning hose helping to dry the face, I tried to relax for a while. But at the rapid climb of 2,200 ft/minute (11 m/sec) the oxygen mask, which had disconnected during the tow, had to be re-connected to the regulator. This was a hard job since the four oxygen hoses had floated around during the rough tow and were tangled with the radio cables. Also the cord of one glove had wrapped around the bail-out bottle, while the other one hung around the stick. (It broke later and I lost my glove again.) At

19,000' (5800 m) the oxygen was finally connected and I took a long breath.

Over 20,000 ft. (6000 m) the rate of climb averaged 1200 ft/min. (6 m/sec). At 25,000' (7,500 m) the roll cloud and the cap cloud were surmounted and with the beautiful visibility over the Sierra and the San Joaquin Valley, the glider climbed into the blue gap between the high lenticular and the roll cloud. I switched now onto 100% oxygen. 16 minutes after release, at 14:07, 28,000 ft. (8,500 m) were reached and I decided to drift south in the updraft zone along the Sierra in order to reach a point between Olancho and Little Lake. (65 miles = 105 km south of release point). From here the downwind run in the direction of Death Valley was scheduled to start.

As to the flight plan it might be mentioned that this route was carefully prepared. The statistics of the downwind runs of the Sierra Wave Project had shown that a glide ratio of more than 30:1 over ground could be expected. From this conservative



FLIGHT ROUTE—The above map shows the route of the cross-country flight from Bishop, California to Williams, Arizona.