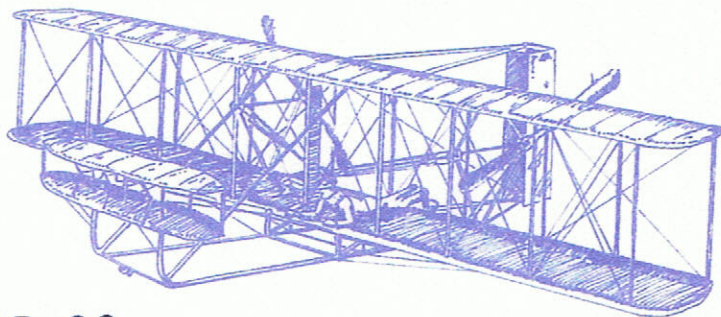


The

Wright Flyer



Fall 1999

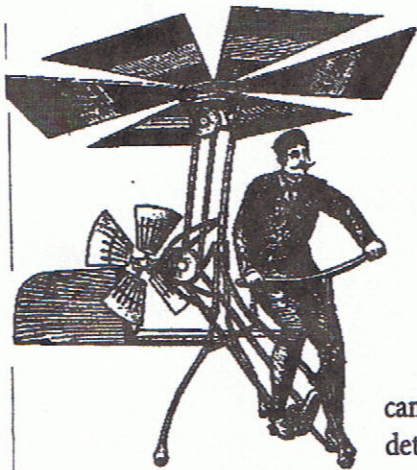
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Flying Through Time

Where Did It Come From?

by Harry Kraemer, CPAM Volunteer

Have you ever wondered where an aviation term came from, how airspace boundaries and altitudes were determined, or the history of a maneuver or its name?

The dimension of our current day **warning areas** (special use airspace extending three nautical miles outward from the U.S. coast) originates from the 18th century. Three nautical miles was the maximum range of a shore-based cannon.

The origin of **Mach One** dates back long before Chuck Yeager broke the sound barrier and even before man started flying airplanes. It was in the late 1800s when a gentleman named Ernst Mach, who was using cannonballs to quantify the speed of sound, gave us this term.

During World War I, pilots were involved in air combat that was becoming an art form and serious battle strategies needed to be worked out. The object was to get onto the enemy's tail and, when on the defense, to be able to get out of the enemy's gun sights. One of Germany's best at this maneuver was Max Immelmann. A favorite trick of his was to pull up as if to do a loop and then execute a half-roll to escape his enemy's gun sights. Today this maneuver is still used and known as the **Immelmann Turn** in honor of this great pilot.

Early in the 1900s, the French would take in the windsock when it was raining or just too bad for flying. Today we use the term **socked in**, meaning the weather is below landing minimums.

In the earliest days of aviation, when flight schools, fuel sales, and maintenance operations were trying to make a buck, they often moved from airport to airport trying to find new business. When they finally settled down at an airport, they became known as **fixed base operators**. Today we refer to them as "FBOs."

Edwin Link was the inventor of the flight simulator or "blue boxes" as they were called. It has been said that Link had a name that matched his mission as he provided the "link" between flight training on the ground and the application of those skills in the air. It is because of this aviation pioneer that you will find a column in some pilot's log books labeled "link" or "simulator."

Jimmy Doolittle was an instrument flying pioneer to whom we owe credit for the term **Kollsman window**—the altimeter window in which we adjust for the local barometric pressure. Early altimeters could only measure to the nearest 50 feet. Doolittle asked Paul Kollsman of the Kollsman Company for help in designing an altimeter that could measure to the nearest 10 feet or so. Today just about every aircraft altimeter has a "Kollsman window."

Each aviation milestone has had its pioneers recognized and honored in many ways. With many terms, procedures, and inventions still in place today, the test of time has shown just how advanced our early pioneers were.