

Some educators are so consumed with the mechanics of running a school that they fail utterly to insure scholarship with character values.

SIXTY-THIRD YEAR—NO. 47

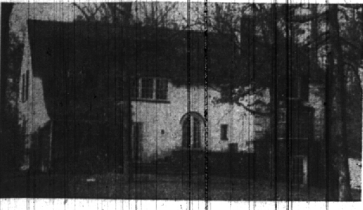
# The Birmingham Eccentric

PART TWO

BIRMINGHAM, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1941

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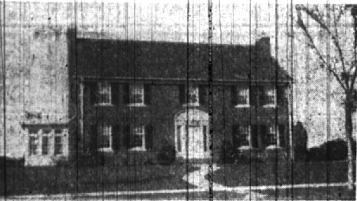
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## "Tea for Two"

Former Airlines Hostess Tells of Her Experience in a Glamorous Profession

By NELLIE HURLEY MINIFIE

IN THE eyes of the average man and woman there are probably few jobs more glamorous than that which an airline stewardess holds. To you and me who live pretty much in one place, who move in a single circle, who live fairly well regulated and routine existences, the life of an airline hostess seems the acme of excitement.

And it is too, Mrs. Charles Elton Buck, III, was telling me this week. The thrill of working eight hours a day at an altitude of 10,000 feet isn't to be overlooked. Nor can you sneeze at the opportunity of meeting exciting personages every day in the week. And Mrs. Buck should know too, for she traveled for 14 months as a stewardess for American Airlines on the run between Fort Worth and Los Angeles.

A bride of only a few months, Mrs. Buck and her young husband have been housekeeping at 201 Merrill street since last October when they moved out to Birmingham from Detroit. He, however, is a Birmingham citizen of long standing, having gone through school here.

Her work with the American Airlines, Mrs. Buck told me, was exciting and glamorous although the professional future was quite limited. A stewardess receives a \$100 a month and after two years service, \$135 a month—the top pay.

**Easy and Interesting**

It's not a profession for a career girl to choose, she says, for there is no room for advancement. The only job stewardesses can expect is a chief hostess and there is, she tells me, only one chief stewardess and practically no turnover in that job.

But it is fairly easy work and interesting. For girls just out of nurses' training and tired of the rigid hospital discipline, it is an ideal position. But it isn't any here near as glamorous as the books and movies say, Mrs. Buck would like you to know.

The requirements for the job are fairly difficult, she says. In the first place an airline hostess must be between 21 and 25 years of age when she applies for her job. For all but two airline companies she must be a registered nurse and she can't be more than five feet six inches tall nor weigh more than 125 pounds. In addition to all of this she must be able to pass a rigid physical examination.

Incidentally there is, Mrs. Buck explained, a very good reason for the height and weight requirements. A girl over five feet six inches who works in a plane spends the better part of her eight work-

ing hours stooping to go through doorways and bumping her head on the ceiling of the plane. And the weight requirement is important too, for it is extremely necessary to keep the crew weight down so that the transport may carry more passenger and mail weight.

Only two large airline companies do not require their stewardesses to be registered nurses. The girls on the Braniff line which goes to Mexico, she told me, are required to speak Spanish fluently and it is the very next thing to impossible to find a girl who is both a registered nurse and a linguist. Most of the girls on this line are drawn from Mexico and from the southwestern United States.

**Why Nurses are Employed**

Why are registered nurses used? Because they are used to rigid discipline and are accustomed to taking orders. In case of emergency they are a group, most likely to remain calm. Nurses, she told me, probably more than any other group of professional women are used to working under stress.

Eddie Rickenbacker, famous World War ace never used women on his Eastern Airlines, Mrs. Buck says. It's a throwback to a number of years ago when he tried girls on his line and they didn't prove successful. There were no specific requirements for stewardesses at that time, she told me, and they weren't chosen from any particular profession.

Whenever Rickenbacker travels on other airlines the stewardesses,

## Visits with Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills Women



Mrs. Charles Elton Buck, III

Mrs. Buck told me she always comes back with the question: "Why aren't you ever interested in changing your policy?" She says, though, that she is satisfied with all and sundry.

Pan-American Airlines also uses stewardesses.

The duties of an airline hostess are many and varied, Mrs. Buck said. The first job though is to look after the comfort of the passengers. She sees that they are supplied with reading material, chewing gum and cigarettes. She serves the meals, explains what makes an airplane stay up in the air and arranges bridge tournaments.

**Meet Celebrities, Too**

On the transcontinental passenger plane such as the one between Fort Worth and Los Angeles—the stewardess makes up the beetles, she says, that passengers like to eat and is their alarm clock in the morning. She points out the scenic spots and watches out for children. She must be able to talk intelligently and fluently and must have a reasonable knowledge of current events.

Because she works out of Los Angeles Mrs. Buck met and flew with a number of the movie colony's superstars—Charlie Chaplin, for instance, and Mary Pickford, Joan Bennett, Walter Pidgeon and Walter Catton.

She has also flown with Frank Buck, the orchestra leader, with

Xavier Cugat, Mrs. Roosevelt and with James Brown, too.

Mrs. Buck was on the plane that Joan Bennett and Warner chartered in May, 1938, to take them to the Kentucky Derby in Louisville. That by the way, was the Derby when the glamorous young Mrs. Bennett lost her jewels, valued at a fabulous price. "She carried them in just an ordinary little reticule case," Mrs. Buck recounted the week. "And after we had taken such good care of them all the while that she had to lose them at the race."

Mrs. Buck met her husband while she was still in stewardess. She told me this week that she caught him when he was 10,000 feet up in the air and weak and defenseless.

**Cupid Active on High**

The turnover among airline hostesses is terrific, she pointed out. They marry rapidly and at the last computation, 18 months was the average tenure for these girls.

Mrs. Buck's home is at Weyerhaeuser in Southern Wisconsin, a town, she told me, with a population of 250 where she owns a home for Christmas. She is a graduate of Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago and before going to work for American Airlines she worked there for Dr. Roy Grinker, famous psychiatrist.

Being young and with no family ties in Chicago she was called in the spring of 1937 by the Red Cross to aid food refugees in the Louisville district. She was there (See TEA FOR TWO on Page 6, Part 1)

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