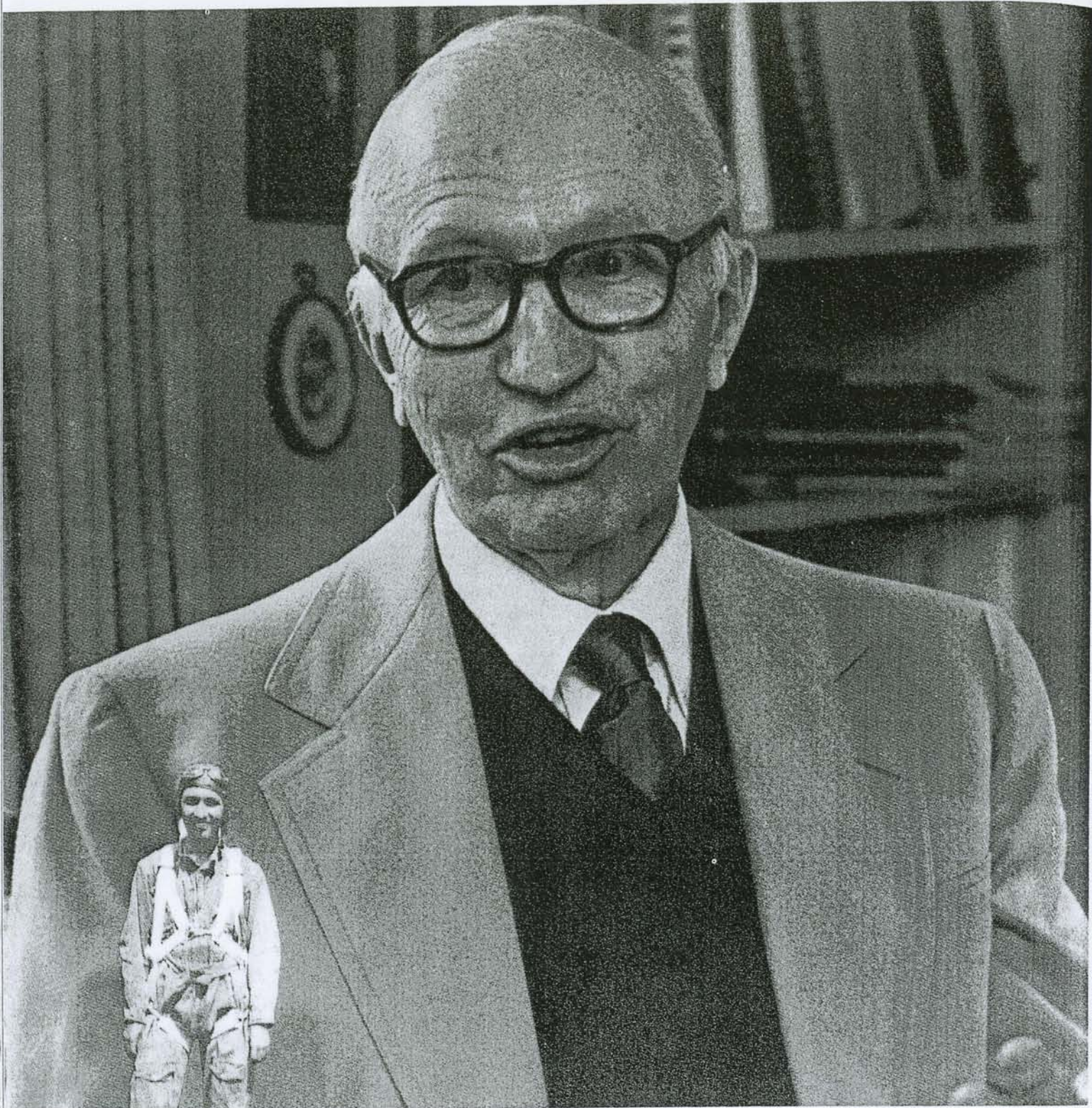


# Encore

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*The Life & Times of Richard Upjohn Light*



# The Life & Times of Richard Upjohn Light

Other than . . .

- Nearly circling the globe while piloting a seaplane at a time when aviation was still in diapers . . .

- Having the refined knowledge and delicate dexterity to enter the inner sanctum of a person's brain as a surgeon . . .

- Spending three weeks at the bottom of the world in ice-bound Antarctica because of his reputation as a geographer and photographer . . .

- Witnessing U.S. bombing strikes launched against Ho Chi Minh's forces while aboard an aircraft carrier off the coast of North Vietnam . . .

- Serving as Kalamazoo College's guiding light and financial guru for two decades during the most dynamic period of growth and development in the school's 150-year history . . .

- And writing and publishing what is viewed as a classic geography text after a 20,000-mile aerial photography mission over the African continent . . .

. . . Other than these and many other deeds, it has been a pretty routine life for Dr. Richard Upjohn Light.

Now 78, retired, and living on a 1,300-acre farm in Prairieville Township in southwest Barry County, Dr.

Light has enjoyed a full career as an aviator, surgeon, photographer, geographer, and journalist. And while there were always scientific objectives for his journeys and exploits, no one would deny him a membership card in the Society of World Adventurers, if such an organization existed.

Dr. Light's extended flights took him across relatively untraveled portions of the world in the 1930s. He made important contributions to both the aviation and scientific communities by pioneering air travel across the Atlantic and around the world.

Dr. Light is a fourth-generation medical man. His great-grandfather, Uriah Upjohn, first came to the United States in the summer of 1828 with a brother, William. They were a kind of two-man scouting party for their parents, a brother, and nine sisters, who later sailed the Atlantic on a 49-day voyage, arriving in late August of 1830. The family followed the Erie Canal to upper New York state and settled in the vicinity of Rochester.

Uriah and William Upjohn began the study of medicine in this country and they earned their degrees in February of 1834 from the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City.

But they had come to the United States to be part of a growing, expanding country and New York state didn't satisfy their pioneering instincts. So Uriah and William went west and ended up in southwest Michigan in the spring of 1835, reaching Kalamazoo County that June. William eventually set up a practice in Hastings while Uriah settled in Richland and for 20 years rode a medical circuit through Kalamazoo, Allegan, Barry, Calhoun, and St. Joseph counties. He married 15-year-old Maria Mills, whose roots were in Connecticut, in the fall of 1837. He was 29 at the time.

Uriah and Maria had 12 children. One of them, William Erastus Upjohn, was Dr. Light's grandfather. William Erastus also became a doctor and practiced with his uncle in Hastings for ten years. But more importantly, he invented a pill-making machine in 1885, dropped out of the practice of medicine, moved to Kalamazoo to form a partnership with brother Henry (also a doctor), and made pharmaceutical history as the founder and builder of the Upjohn Company.

"W. E.," as he was called, had three daughters and a son—Winifred, Dorothy, Genevieve, and William Harold.

*When Lindbergh flew the Atlantic I really got the bug.*

Winifred Upjohn, the eldest child, was Dr. Light's mother. After her first short-lived marriage ended in divorce, she married S. Rudolph Light, the son of a Dayton, Ohio, minister. He earned his medical degree from the University of Michigan and had come to Kalamazoo to do an internship in psychiatry at what was then known as "the state asylum."

Dr. Light was born on March 29, 1902, the child of his mother's first marriage.

When S. Rudolph Light, who would serve as Kalamazoo's mayor someday, married the oldest daughter of the founder of the Upjohn Company in June of 1908, he also adopted her son and gave the boy, then six years old, his name. The senior Light joined the Upjohn Company in 1907 and became a vice president, remaining active until 1930.

Dr. Light was enrolled in Kalamazoo schools through the tenth grade. But in 1917, he switched to the Culver Military Academy and completed his high school education there in 1920. Next stop was Yale University, "where I majored in economics and took everything except Latin," said Light, who earned his initial college degree in 1924.

Then the family tradition called. "I came back to Ann Arbor to enroll in the University of Michigan's medical school. That's where my father and grandfather had studied. And my cousin, Dr. E. Gifford Upjohn, was enrolled there at the time." He earned his medical degree in 1928.

While his ancestors left the east and headed west to quench their pioneering thirst, Dr. Light reversed that journey in search of new horizons as a brain surgeon.

At Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston, Light studied under Dr. Harvey Cushing, a medical legend in his own time.

"Dr. Cushing was the outstanding neurosurgeon in the world at the time,"

Light said. "It was a growing, developing science in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Before Dr. Cushing's innovations, the mortality rate for brain tumor surgery was over 70 percent. When his career ended, less than five percent of the patients died on the table."

In April of 1931, Cushing operated on his 2,000th verified brain tumor. Dr. Light and a fellow intern recorded the event on film. It is still in existence, testimony to how the brain surgeon practiced his skills a half-century ago.

In between assistant residencies in neurosurgery and general surgery in the early 1930s, Dr. Light was an Arthur Tracy Cabot Fellow at the Harvard Medical School, an instructor in surgery at Yale's school of medicine, and a faculty member at the University of Rochester.

In a 1934 edition of the *Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine*, Dr. Light, a research assistant in surgery at Yale at the time, introduced a device by which electrical stimulation of the nervous system could be accomplished by remote control in a normal animal unaware of the stimulus. It was useful in the research of the nervous system's influence on automatic body functions, such as sleep, water metabolism, menstruation, blood pressure, digestion, and temperature control.

One of the outgrowths of remote stimulation studies was the development of the cardiac pacemaker. Two years after his discovery, Dr. Light would return to his native Kalamazoo to begin private practice as a neurosurgeon on the top floor of Borgess Hospital. Kalamazoo thus became the first out-state city to offer services in neurosurgery.

It's easy to understand why Dr. Light had such a high-flying career as a brain surgeon—when he wasn't in the classroom or in the operating room, he was up in the air himself. "When Lindbergh flew the Atlantic," he said, "I really got the bug," But the "infec-

Below: Dr. Light's first airplane. Similar ones were used by Thompson Aeronautical to fly mail in and out of the Kalamazoo Airport.

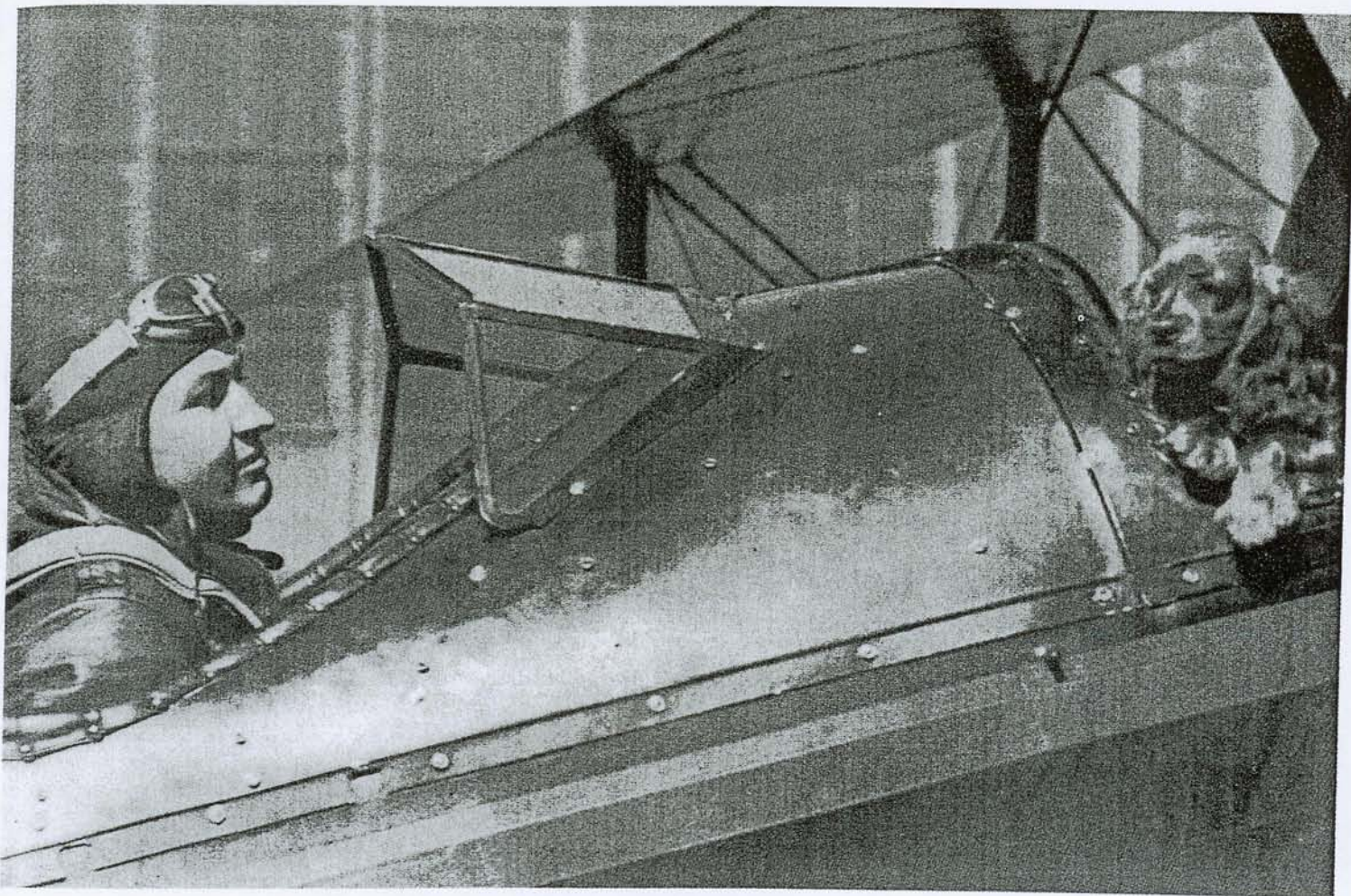


tion," or should we say "affection," for flying touched him nearly a decade before Lucky Lindy made his flight.

Dr. Light's first flight was over the Gull Lake area in 1919 when a barnstorming pilot visited the area with his "Jenny." The flyer broke his leg, so he had to hold over for a while. A friend of Light's was a pilot, so they borrowed the plane and up they went.

That led to a series of flying lessons at the Ypsilanti Air Field when Light was a senior at the University of Michigan med school. "My interest became so keen," he said, "that as soon as I got my degree I enlisted in the Army Air Corps for a year to become a flight cadet."

After he was mustered out of the service, Light had a week before he had to report to his internship in Boston. So



Dr. Light and his pet, "Red" in the cockpit of the Pitcairn airplane. Taken in 1931.

he bought a small plane—his first. For the next ten years, that's how he spent his weekends, vacations, and free time. Light garnered a reputation as "the flying doctor" as he winged to Panama and back and all over Mexico in the early 1930s. But those trips were only warmups for his great adventures later in the decade.

Germinating in the back of his mind was the "fly-around-the-world" notion. Despite his duties as an instructor at Yale, he began to plan his adventure. Early in 1934, he sought U.S. State Department permission to fly over several foreign countries. Light

equipped his Bellanca with pontoons, compiled a list of medical clinics he could attend, and took off on August 20, 1934, from New Haven, Connecticut.

The 29,000-mile flight took five months. When Light took off, accompanied by a friend as his navigator, it was only seven years after Charles A. Lindbergh's epic solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean. It was undertaken at a time when aviation exploits were still high drama.

Light and fellow Yale graduate Robert Wilson flew the 420-horsepower single-engine Bellanca Skyrocket from New Haven, Connecticut, to Japan.

They chronicled their journey in a book—*Journal of a Seaplane Cruise Around the World*, which Light authored and published in 1937.

The plane was loaded with 500 pounds of spare parts and supplies, a raft, parachutes, and an anchor with six feet of rope. Sometimes, because of the load, the takeoffs were not exactly textbook quality. Light once had to try six times before he was able to lift the plane off the water.

At the start of the journey on August 20, 1934, Light didn't get airborne until his second run. In all the excitement of the adventure, he even forgot his wallet. First stop was Greenland.

*The fliers missed their destination in Greenland and spent the night in an Eskimo settlement.*

The global trip took the Light-Wilson tandem to Iceland, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Iraq, Iran (Persia), India, Thailand (Siam), Malaya, Java, Borneo, and The Philippines. Light was reportedly the first American to fly into The Philippines.

Technically, it wasn't an around-the-world flight because Light mounted his *Bellanca* on the deck of a ship and sailed across the Pacific to Vancouver because of the wintery weather. But in those pioneering days of aviation, no one quibbled over such discrepancies. Besides, the plane didn't have that kind of safe flying range. It was still a Homeric endeavor.

"We had a daily cruising range of 1,000 miles," Light said, "but we never did more than 700. I guess we were never in a big hurry. The flight was planned so that I could attend the various clinics in neurosurgery. Such a global journey normally took two months. We did it in five."

Once in British Columbia, Light flew down the west coast to Mexico, headed east for Cuba, north to Florida, and then home to Long Island for a homecoming on January 24, 1935.

The two aviators made lengthy stops in some ports. Dr. Light spent five weeks, for example, observing neurosurgical procedures in European clinics in Edinburgh, London, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Berlin, Athens, and Rome. Later, he was confined to bed for a week in Bangkok to do battle with a cold. Christmas and New Year's Eve of 1934 were spent aboard the *S. S. Empress*, coming home with Connie Mack's all-star baseball team that had been touring Japan.

According to Light, the most dramatic part of the flight was the venture out over the North Atlantic where he and Wilson retraced some of Lindbergh's route.

**A**round-the-world flights were nothing new back in the mid-

1930s, but they still tickled the fancy of many people, much like space travel still fascinates the people of the 1980s.

In Light's published account of the flight, he captured some of the trepidation of the early hours of the adventure:

"... I took the choice of staying low . . . instead of going high to stay in sunlight. Low it was, soon to 150 feet [above the ocean's surface] and even less. We passed beyond the ice, but for a long way big icebergs loomed out of the mist, their tops in the clouds.

"It rained a good deal, making the windshield practically opaque, so there was much instrument work. Could see the water out of the side windows most of the time, but it was a poor sight, with 20 to 30-foot waves breaking below us, crashing over icebergs in huge cascades, and acting as though we were food for a hungry monster . . ."

One false sputter or two from the *Bellanca*'s single engine would have made them the monster's fare for the day.

The fliers missed their destination in Greenland by 25 miles and instead spent the night in an Eskimo settlement, curled up in sleeping bags and resting on sheepskins as mattresses.

Light embarked from New Haven in an airplane that had no glamorous moniker such as *The Spirit of St. Louis*. That was taken care of by one of the doctor's hosts in Greenland. He suggested the Eskimo expression "Asulinak," which has a dozen translations, one of which is, "You're crazy enough."

When the *Bellanca* took off in August of 1934, banked and settled on a northeasterly course and "Destination Europe," there was little fanfare at the time. But 18 days and 4,000 miles later, as the aviators completed the first leg of their journey in the harbor of Edinburgh, Scotland, Light was richly congratulated for the crossing and emerged as a leading candidate for the mythical title of "Number One Private Flyer in the United States." That's because he had just completed what was probably the first Atlantic flight undertaken for the sole purpose of pure sport and

transportation.

Leaving Europe for Asia, they encountered conditions that were desert or tropical on a route which made a deep swing southward even beyond the equator. Over the land, it was more dangerous than over the water, because the pontoons carried gasoline and would have exploded on contact with the hot desert sands. They carried parachutes and hoped they would not have to use them.

Syria, Iraq, Iran, Baluchistan, Pakistan, India, Burma, Siam, Malaya, Java, Bali, Borneo—it was a long way to the Philippines, nearly eight weeks. Medical visits tapered off; only at Bombay, Calcutta, and Moulmein did Dr. Light take time to see hospitals or health officers. The flying problems were daily, however, as the seaplane was getting heavier with souvenirs and less airworthy from tropical wilt.

They made port at Vancouver on January 2, 1935, and faced the problem of flying their seaplane back to the east coast in the dead of winter. With lakes and rivers frozen, the direct route was out, and they had to swing south. It was a long pull, 4,000 miles down the west coast to southern Mexico, over to Cuba, and north from Florida to New York.

One incident especially stands out in Dr. Light's memory—they couldn't find Cuba! A late afternoon start from Carmen in Mexico, sloppy navigation by both Light and Wilson, and the slender, pencil-thin western tip of Cuba left them lost in mid-ocean, and they had to go back for a landing in darkness off the coast of Yucatan, where they anchored behind a barrier reef to spend a rough night on board.

The greatest task, he once told a reporter from *The New York Times*, was obtaining special flight permission from the 28 nations over which he planned to fly. He had to work through the U.S. State Department and the whole matter took six months. Armed with the necessary papers, the crossing of international borders proved easy. Inspec-

tions were brief and informal because authorities were informed much in advance through his plane's radio.

Kalamazoo ham radio operators intercepted relayed messages from Light's plane during the five-month journey. Wilson made it a practice to keep at least one station constantly informed of the plane's position, course, and progress. Ground stations in Greenland and Iceland appeared to shut down all other business to aid them. The only impossible weather conditions were encountered during a severe electrical storm over the Mediterranean.

Their supplies were always in place at every landing along the route through an arrangement with an oil company who had a copy of the itinerary.

Emergency gear aboard the Bellanca included a rubber raft that could be outfitted with a sail and keel, life preservers, parachutes, food, water, cooking utensils, a tent, sleeping bags, and mosquito netting.

Light recalled that he and Wilson had no forced landings with the Bellanca because of engine trouble. The only mechanical trouble was with the ignition—several replacements were needed because of heavy tropical rains.

Why did he do it?

"I guess because I wanted to try it," Dr. Light said. "Lindbergh and his wife, Anne, had done it and I figured that I could also. I was convinced at the time that flying was a tremendous way to travel and see the world. It was the safest period of aviation. The engine was the safest. The radial engines of the day were the most dependable ever used in aviation. There was only one engine to a plane, but they just never quit."

In 1935, Light married Mary Upjohn. She was the daughter of William Harold Upjohn, the lone son of the drug company's founder. She also had a wanderlust and a love of aviation. In 1937, the Lights bought a new 550-

horsepower Bellanca monoplane in preparation for a four-month, 35,000-mile flight over Central and South America and Africa. Mary acted as the co-pilot, radio operator, and photographer.

Their itinerary took them over Central America and the west coast of South America. They then hopped over the Andes to Rio de Janeiro and

sailed to Cape Town, South Africa. Their task, fostered and promoted by the American Geographical Society in New York City, was to capture through aerial photos the geography of Africa—its mountains, its agricultures, its soil conditions, and its settlements. They had also focused their cameras on Central and South America from the air.

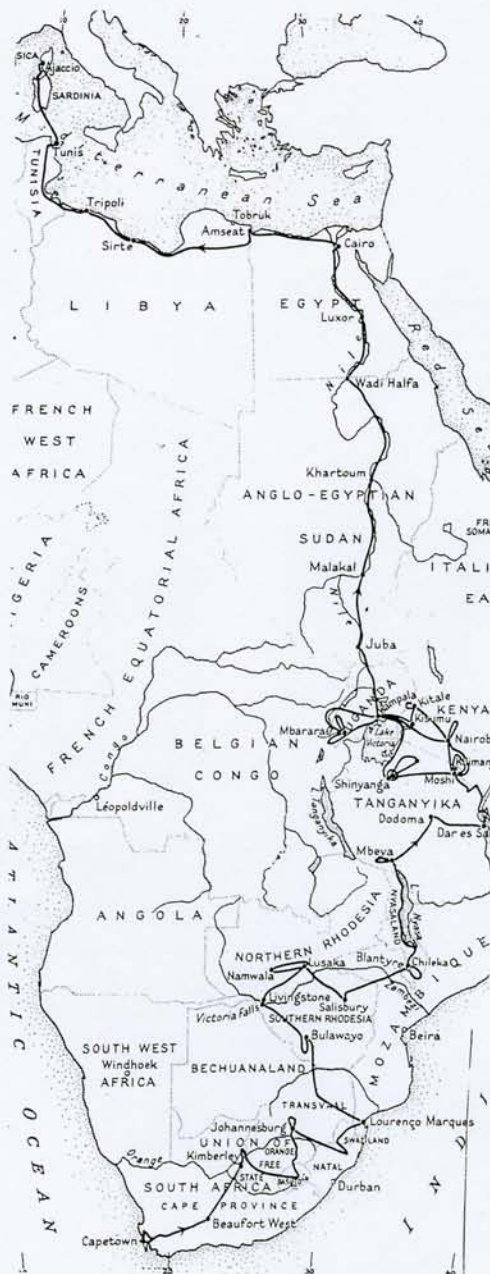
Their report and photographs were published by the society in 1941 under the title of "Focus on Africa." They left in September of 1937 and returned in February of 1938.

Their route map, constructed afterward, looks like a child's picture puzzle, with zigs and zags and backtracks all over the page. They flew to Kilimanjaro three times before finding the crater free of clouds. During the month of December, they made no less than nine flights to the Mountains of the Moon—the Ruwenzori—to capture that one, single cloudless day when the whole massif was exposed to view.

The airplane was not pressurized. Above 15,000 feet, they breathed oxygen from a tube held between the teeth. The windows were cranked down for picture taking, and the photographer hung her camera out in the icy blasts of high altitude or in the dripping steam of the jungle. Pilot and photographer were linked by intercom, and her directions to him were often brief but explicit—"Get the wing out of the way! Slow down! Slow down! My word, those elephants are huge."

There were exciting moments, especially in the tropical rainbelt which moves northward or southward across the equator with the seasons, but never disappears. Many times they were turned back or grounded by bad weather, and once they flew alongside a tornado, much like the one that hit Kalamazoo last May. This one touched down on Lake Victoria and the "damage" done was tons of water sucked up through the crooked, knee-like funnel into its parent cloud floating 2,000 feet above.

They landed on the mile-high



African Flight: dark line indicates line of flight.

*Enrollment had fallen from 600 to 360 at Kalamazoo College and the faculty was in turmoil.*

wilderness of the Serengeti Plain and heard from the cockpit the roar of lions as soon as the motor was shut off. They pitched their tent and camped for three days, never feeling quite safe from the prowling lions that constantly threatened the camp.

"Our trip ended rather abruptly," recalled Light. "The plane was badly damaged when an airport hangar collapsed on it on the island of Corsica off Italy." The airplane was shipped home.

"Focus on Africa" was praised as an entertaining three-in-one look at the continent in terms of travel, adventure, and history. Those in the geography press viewed it as a "classic" research tool, "a fascinating and sound geography without flamboyance and technical display. It was obviously done by a student of history and geography who is also a devotee of pure-and-simple adventure." "Focus on Africa" was used for many years in college courses.

"We came back from Africa and sold the plane," Light said. "I got down to the business of surgery. It was going to be either medicine or aviation. I was no longer really enthused about flying per se. I would always like flying to new lands and different places, but I never cared for just zipping in and out of airports just for the sake of flying."

So except for a geographical and photographic excursion to Alaska with his sons later in life and serving as the first chairman of the city of Kalamazoo's Airport Advisory Commission when it was initially formed, Light for all intents and purposes was through as an active aviator. He piloted his last plane in 1939.

Light concentrated on his medical career and the betterment of his community. As the unofficial historian of the Upjohn clan, he realized that both were ingrained deeply in the family tradition.

He served as a member of the Upjohn Company's board of directors from 1937 to 1968. He succeeded his

father as a board trustee for the American National Bank and Trust Company of Kalamazoo, serving from 1955 to 1962. The senior Light was an organizer of that financial institution and served as its president during World War II.

In 1951, he was chosen to sit on the Kalamazoo College Board of Trustees and began 23 years of service, a period of growth and development unmatched in the school's previous decades. He became the chairman of the board in 1953 and had that post until his retirement in June of 1974.

Kalamazoo College in 1952 was in desperate need of something. There had been 15 years of operating deficits and a corresponding erosion of endowment. Enrollment had fallen from 600 to 360, the faculty was in turmoil, and, in despair, the president had requested a leave of absence following two student pranks against him. The college had no choice but to change, Dr. Light recalled.

The president was given terminal leave and the trustees began a probe into the operation of the college. They broke up into committees, each one examining a different aspect of the college operation. As a result of their studies, a series of changes were made, aimed at separating and improving the three basic divisions of the college—teaching, administration, and trusteeship.

During the turn-around period, a caretaker administration, consisting of Harold Smith (the business manager) and Dr. Light (called executive trustee), managed the college for a year until the new president, Weimer K. Hicks, could take charge on January 1, 1954. During this period, expenses and income were brought into balance.

There also was an emphasis on the recruitment of top-quality faculty members and an improved salary schedule for this pool of talent.

During the Hicks-Light regime, enrollment at Kalamazoo College grew from 360 to 1,400. The value of the

physical plant escalated from \$2 million to \$20 million and the college's endowment expanded 21 times during that 23-year period.

"Dr. Hicks, the board, and myself realized that every college in the nation would have to double in size to cope with the birth rate," Dr. Light said. "So we set out to double the size of the college. We did the construction in phases and we went to a year-round, four-quarter operation to help our enrollment. We always had the money on hand before we started building. I think we raised about \$28 million in solid pledges. That kept the college out of debt, which in turn kept tuition rates below our competition and enhanced our enrollment."

It was under Light's leadership that Kalamazoo College inaugurated its innovative foreign study program for its students. The summer-abroad concept helped the college kick off its year-round class schedule both on and off-campus. The money to endow the foreign study program came from a trust fund endowed by his father, S. R. Light.

In the summer of 1961, Dr. Light raised \$4.5 million for the college's development program. This helped finance an extensive project in which every building on campus was either rebuilt or modernized. Nine new structures were added, including a fine arts building which has been named after Dr. Light.

In 1966, the Light-led board capped off a three-year fund-raising effort. This time the target was \$5.5 million. It was to be used as seed money to attract a \$2.2 million Ford Foundation "Challenge Grant for Academic Enrichment." That was also part-and-parcel of the \$15 million blueprint. The ambitious building plans for the 1960s included a new library, men's dorm, classroom building, dining hall, student center, swimming pool, women's dorm, and, of course, the fine arts

building.

Even before his impact on Kalamazoo College, Dr. Light was keenly involved with changing the thrust of another important community facility. In the mid-1940s, he was appointed chairman of a local committee that was charged with making a complete analysis of the operation of Bronson Hospital.

"In 1945, the Upjohn Company was approached for a contribution to the hospital," Light said. "I asked the board of directors of the Upjohn Company, of which I was a member, to hold up the donation until a study could be made of the hospital's plans and practices."

A study committee was appointed consisting of medical professionals from major institutions in the country. Significant changes were recommended by the committee, including the initiation of intern and resident programs and the hiring of an administrator certified by the American Board of Hospital Administrators. The recommendation concerning the administrator was important because Bronson Hospital had been operated for many years by the Methodist Church, which customarily had appointed retired ministers as hospital administrators.

"I think it is safe to say," Light said, "that the committee brought modern management techniques to the hospital and started it on the road to the great, comprehensive medical facility that it is today."

The senior citizens of southwest Michigan also should have a debt of gratitude for Dr. Light's community service. During his days of high adventure, he had the opportunity to visit Stockholm and witness how the Swedes care for their elderly, specifically by providing supervised accommodations.

Louis W. Sutherland, then mayor of Kalamazoo, appointed Dr. Light to a committee to study the problem of the community's aging. The result was a carbon copy of the Swedish system of

local, organized efforts to create a fund for senior citizen services.

Light was the first president of the Senior Citizens Fund which today operates three such residences in Kalamazoo—the Harold and Grace Upjohn Community Nursing Home at 2400 Portage, Heritage Hills at 600 Golden Drive, and the Merrill Residence at 475 W. Lovell.

In June of 1952, Light took his four sons on a geographical expedition to southeast Alaska to photograph 16 glaciers.

The trip was part of a research program, which ultimately ran for 50 years, in the ice fields of southeastern Alaska—those with tidal glaciers.

The Lights' mission was to photo-

graph at close range the changing tidal fronts of the many glaciers of the region. In the course of a month, they covered about a thousand miles and made perhaps 50 landings and climbs over the rocks to observation points.

What about Dr. Light's medical career?

"I had developed a skin problem, some kind of rash, a sun sensitivity. It kept me out of World War II and eventually prevented me from doing surgery," Dr. Light said. "I couldn't scrub up. It wouldn't go away. So I retired in 1946."

He retired only from medicine, as Kalamazoo College can testify. And so could the American Geographical Society. He first came into contact with the society through his countless hours of study and research as he prepared for his global seaplane flight. It was that flight that kindled Dr. Light's interest in geography and it was the society that published most of his chronicles, accounts, and geographical treatises.

"The society was organized in 1852," he said. "It is governed by a council. I served as its president from 1947 to 1956. That's like being the chairman of the board of trustees at a college. The society is a research organization that publishes quarterly journals on scientific geography. It has the largest and best collection of books and maps in the western hemisphere. It is a gold mine for geography scholars."

Light became the 11th president of the society and the only non-New Yorker to hold that post other than Admiral Robert Edwin Peary, who led the first successful expedition to the North Pole in 1908 and 1909.

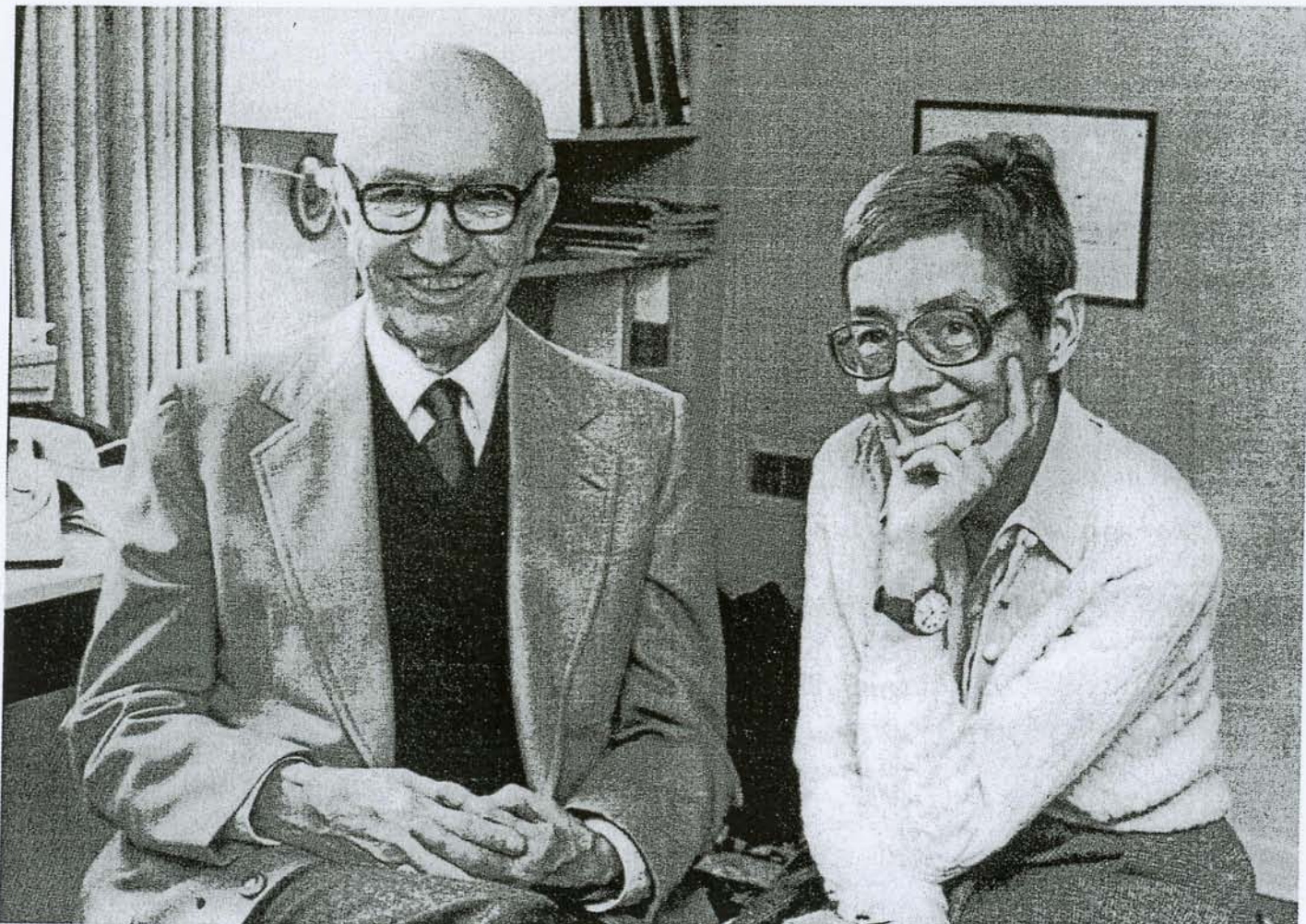
In 1964, Light was selected by the National Science Foundation to serve as a visiting scientist to Antarctica, which had been the focal point of much research and study during the "International Geophysical Year (IGY) of 1957-58."

"I was there for three weeks in all," Dr. Light recalled, "and flew a total of





*I was shot off the deck by a catapult — from zero to 100 knots in 2.1 seconds!*



Dr. and Mrs. Richard U. Light

7,000 miles over that continent. I visited all five of the U.S. military bases there and even was able to visit the Russian base at Vostok. The glaciers, the icebergs—they were awesome and majestic at the same time. And the wildlife is exceedingly interesting, particularly the colonies of penguins.”

From those three weeks, Dr. Light published another journal for the American Geographical Society—“Antarctica Seven Years After the IGY: United States Scientific and Support Activities, 1964-65.”

It was through that experience that he was able to add Vietnam to his

itinerary.

“It was the spring of 1966,” said Dr. Light. “During my visit to Antarctica, I had met the admiral of the USS Kitty Hawk, the aircraft carrier flagship for the American fleet. He invited me to visit him on board someday and I took him up on it.

“At the time, the Kitty Hawk was in the south China Sea,” Dr. Light said. “President Johnson had just ordered the resumption of full-scale bombing on North Vietnam, so the ship was involved in full battle maneuvers. I watched landings and takeoffs 12 hours a day. There were eight strikes each day. In all, I was on board a week as the carrier cruised about 150 miles

off the Haiphong harbor. I was taken to and taken off the Kitty Hawk by one of the planes. I was caught by the hook as we landed and shot off the deck by catapult. From zero to 100 knots in 2.1 seconds. Quite a difference from my old Bellanca monoplane!”

The waters of the China Sea, the glaciers of Alaska, the deserts of Antarctica, the falls of Lake Victoria, the snows of Kilimanjaro. They are all quite different from the gently rolling farmland of southeast Barry County where Dr. Richard Upjohn Light, 78 years old, can enjoy the countryside, the tranquility, and the solitude, and reflect on a “rather routine” eight decades of life. □