FUELLESS MOTOR WORKS, IS CLAIM

Pittsburgher's Invention Operates Successfully, Engineers Report to Government Officials—Lindbergh, Interested in It, Makes Flight to New York From Detroit.

By HERBERT LITTLE,
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Washington, Feb. 25.—Electrical engineers have reported to government officials that the small size model of the Hendershot fuelless motor has operated successfully, the United Press learned tonight.

Charles A. Lindbergh has been inspecting the invention and conferring with its inventor on behalf of the Guggenheim Foundation for the promotion of aeronautics, which has been asked to back an attempt to develop the motor for commercial airplane purposes.

KEPT PLANS SECRET.

Lester J. Hendershot, Pittsburgh inventor of the motor, has kept secret from government aviation officials, with whom he conferred, the two or three most important details of the new mechanism.

Commerce department aviation officials said, however, that there was little doubt that Hendershot had found a method of obtaining convertible energy from terrestial magnetism and the rotation of the earth, whereby power could be supplied for a long period of time without fuel.

Whether the process can be carried out on a large scale is not known here. Officials said the invention was still in the "experimental stage." It was pointed out that dynamos are relatviely rather heavy—heavier in proportion to power than gasoline airplane engines—but if the weight of this motor can be kept down, it will be practical for aviation because no fuel need be carried.

Som officials thought the development for ground use might be even greater than for airplane uses. It would revolutionize all industry if expanded and conceivably might make unnecessary the production of oil, coal and water, because energy made available in one form is easily transformed into light, heat or power.

D. Barr Peat of Pittsburgh, reported to be backing Hendershot, is a partner in a commercial airplane company operating an air mail contract line out of Pittsburgh.

Opinion was expressed that neither Lindbergh nor the Guggenheim Foundation yet has approved the invention, but much credit was given the reports in view of the fact that the Foundation intended to give Hendershot's invention complete tests.

USES EARTH CURRENTS.

Hendershot, inventor of the motor, is a free-lance engineer of Pittsburgh. He had an idea that the "earth currents" which made the brilliant Aurora Borealis in northern skies could be harnessed and made to work an engine.

Puttering about the Bettis airport, Hendershot attracted the attention of the port manager, Peat.

Peat gaped with perplexity at the idea, and when his friend, William B. Stout, head of the aircraft division of the Ford Motor Co., landed at the field several weeks ago he invited Stout to look at the motor.

NO WIRES USED.

Stout saw a small contraption like any other small electric motor, mounted on a block. Without connection by outside wires, the motor hummed around at 1,500 to 1,800 revolutions per minute.

Hendershot estimated that his motor would run 2,000 hours before the material with which he made the magneto would wear down. It was the winding and substance he used which picked up the earth currents, the inventor explained.

"Like a radio tube picks sound waves from the air," Stout said, "the magneto picked up waves from the earth, which were similar to electricity.

"I inspected the makeup sufficiently to convince me that there was merit to the motor and not humbug."

Stout invited Hendershot and Peat to take the engine to the Ford laboratory at Dearborn, Mich., to make more thorough tests.

Meantime, Major Lanphier, Selfridge Field, Mich., army air commander, whom Peat knew in the army, landed at the field and was shown the creation.

Lanphier was enthused and also invited the two to Selfridge field, where he said everything possible would be done to assist them in experimental work. They arrived about three weeks ago.

SENDS FOR LINDY.

Lanphier was so enthusiastic over the invention, he sent for Lindbergh. The Lone Eagle responded promptly. He flew secretly from St. Louis, bringing his financial backers. Together they went to Ford's. Lindbergh got behind the invention whole-heartedly. He set out today to do what he could for its development.

Hendershot's fuelless motor has no moving parts and cannot wear out, Hendershot was quoted as saying in a copyrighted interview published by the Mount Clemens, Mich., Daily Leader tonight.

A motor large enough to produce 45 horsepower can be manufactured for $12.50, Hendershot said.

WHAT IT MAY DO.

Hendershot refused to discuss the details of his invention but told something of what he expects it to accomplish.

He foresaw a day when heat, light and power would be supplied by turning a lever.

The "magnet box" which is the secret of the Hendershot's invention is a metal receptacle about the size of a shoe box, with a wire protruding from it. It produces force from the earth's magnetic field and converts it into heat, power or light, Hendershot said.

In tests, the "magnet box" has produced power to light barracks at Selfridge field, he said.

Applied to airplanes, he pointed out, the "magnet box" would provide means for almost indefinite flying without a load of fuel.

A corporation has been organized to develop the invention, and basic patents have been obtained, he said. Stockholders besides Hendershot were sai dto be D. Barr Peat, McKeesport, Pa.; Major Thomas G. Lanphier, United States air service, and Col. Henry Breckenridge of the Guggenheim foundation.

Who He Is!

L. J. Hendershot, whose fuelless motor has stirred the world because of apparent approval of the principle by Col. Charles A. Lindbergh and Maj. Thomas Lanphier at Selfridge field, Mt. Clemens, Mich., has been lifted from his ordinary existence in West Elizabeth to a nationally-heralded personage overnight.

For years Hendershot, now aged 29, has resided in Fourth st., West Elizabeth, and between jobs puttered with various mechanical and electrical inventions in a corner of the basement in the Hendershot home. The corner, next to the furnace, is guarded by his wife, and she would allow no one to see it in the absence of her husband.

Hendershot never received more than a grade school education but his wife said he had spent some time in experimental work in Cornell university.

He formerly was employed in the works of the Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Co., and the Pennsylvania railroad. His job before he left to go to Washington and Detroit with D. Barr Peat, to promote his invention, was that of concrete inspector on the new Clairton rd.

He has been married for 10 years. He and his wife and son live with his mother, Mrs. Effie M. Hendershot.

LINDY IN NEW YORK

Curtiss Field, New York, Feb. 25.—Col. Charles A. Lindbergh landed here shortly after 5 p. m. with a party of his friends and financial backers in a Ryan Brougham plane.

The landing here was intended to be secret, and the cold wind swept field was bare of all signs of activity. After leaving the plane, the Lindbergh party entered two automobiles. It was understood their destination was the Guggenheim estate at Port Washington, L. I.

Maj. Thomas G. Lanphier, head of the first pursuit group of the army air service, Selfridge Field, Michigan, was to have landed with the Lindbergh party in another plane. A telegram said Lanphier was forced down by darkness at Buffalo and would come to New York by train.