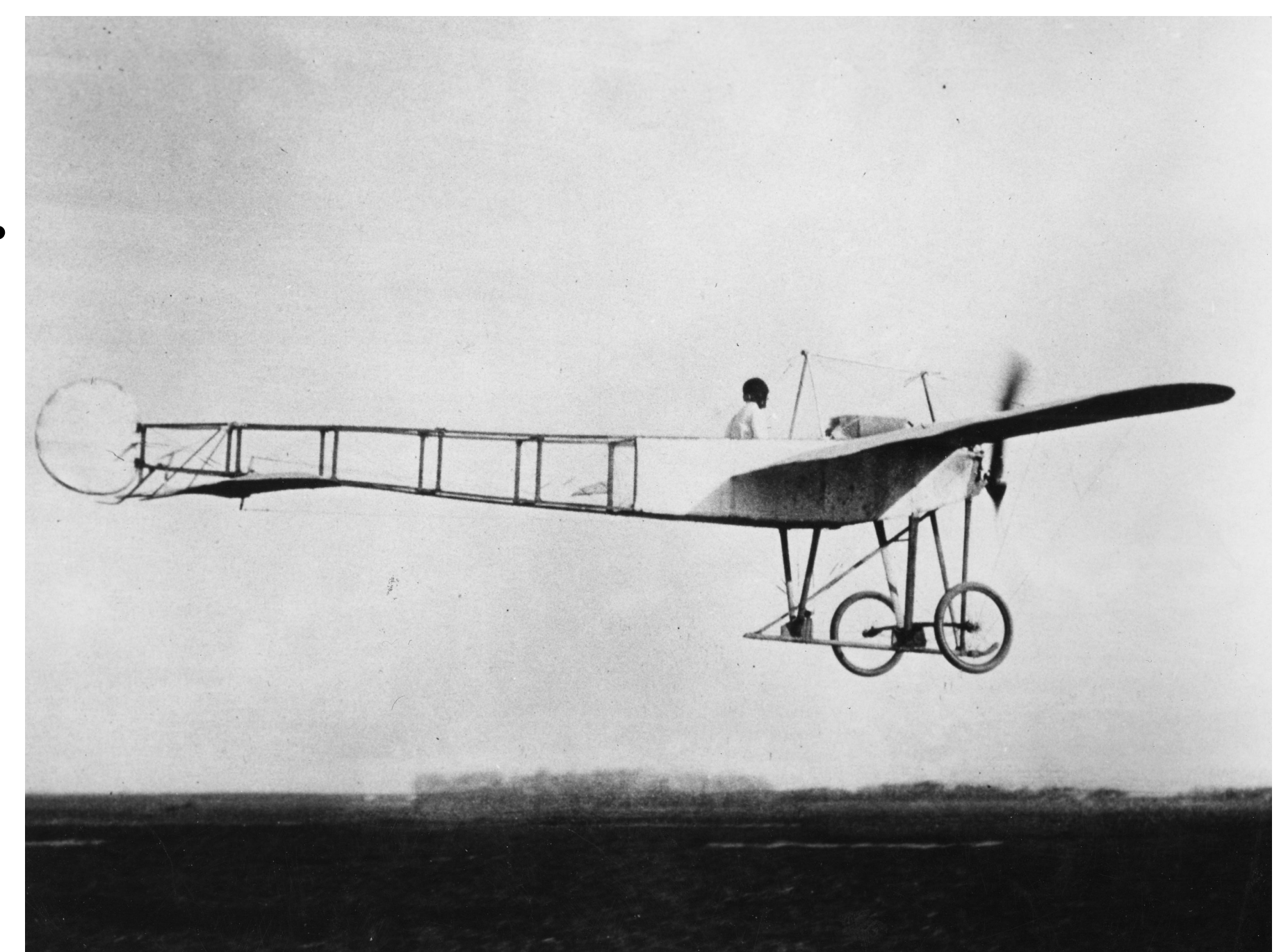
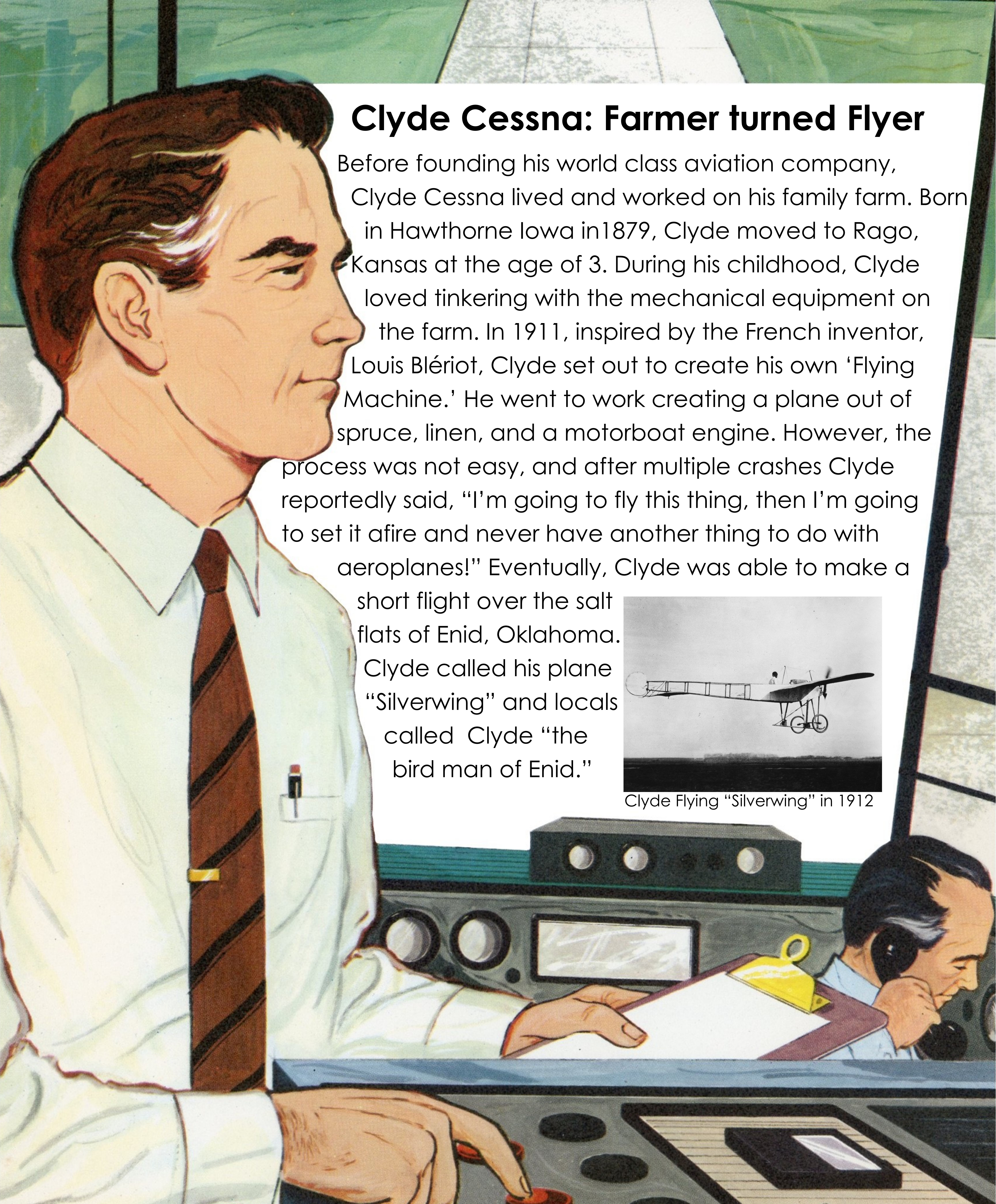


## Clyde Cessna: Farmer turned Flyer

Before founding his world class aviation company, Clyde Cessna lived and worked on his family farm. Born in Hawthorne Iowa in 1879, Clyde moved to Rago, Kansas at the age of 3. During his childhood, Clyde loved tinkering with the mechanical equipment on the farm. In 1911, inspired by the French inventor, Louis Blériot, Clyde set out to create his own 'Flying Machine.' He went to work creating a plane out of spruce, linen, and a motorboat engine. However, the process was not easy, and after multiple crashes Clyde reportedly said, "I'm going to fly this thing, then I'm going to set it afire and never have another thing to do with aeroplanes!" Eventually, Clyde was able to make a short flight over the salt flats of Enid, Oklahoma. Clyde called his plane "Silverwing" and locals called Clyde "the bird man of Enid."



Clyde Flying "Silverwing" in 1912

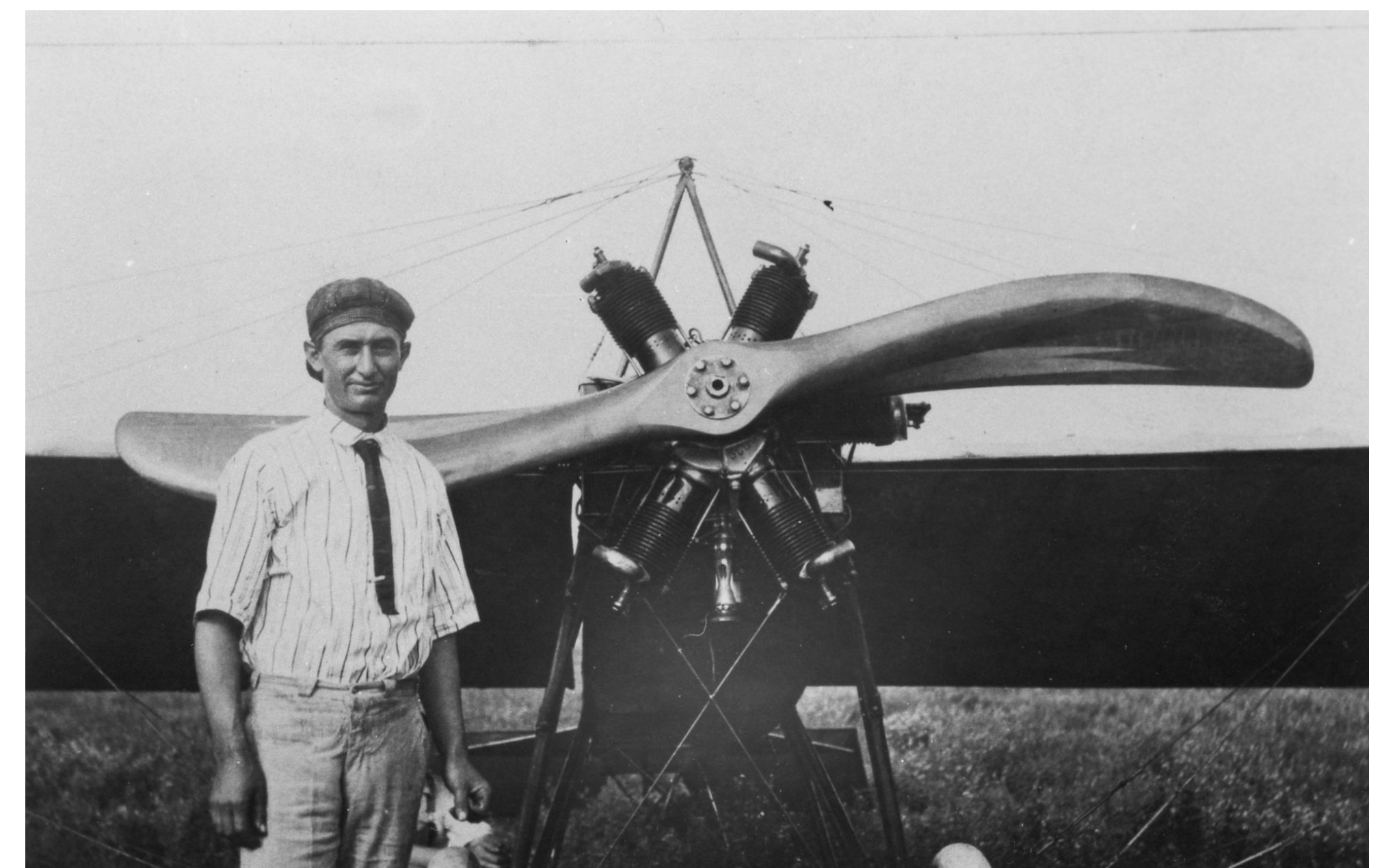




## The Bird Man becomes a Manufacturer

After the success of the Silverwing, Clyde Cessna did not make good on his promise to burn the machine and quit airplanes for good. Instead he returned to his farm and built a new airplane every year in his barn. Clyde flew his new inventions to local county fairs to demonstrate the speed of his machines and raise money to build more. Convinced that the world was "speed crazy," Clyde saw small airplanes as a safer alternative to high speed land travel, and even claimed "speed is the only reason for flying." In 1917 he occupied a warehouse in Wichita, and became the city's first airplane manufacturer.

Clyde called his new design the "Comet," an indication of the lengths he was willing to go for speed and the fiery resolve he would use to harness it.



Clyde Cessna in 1917



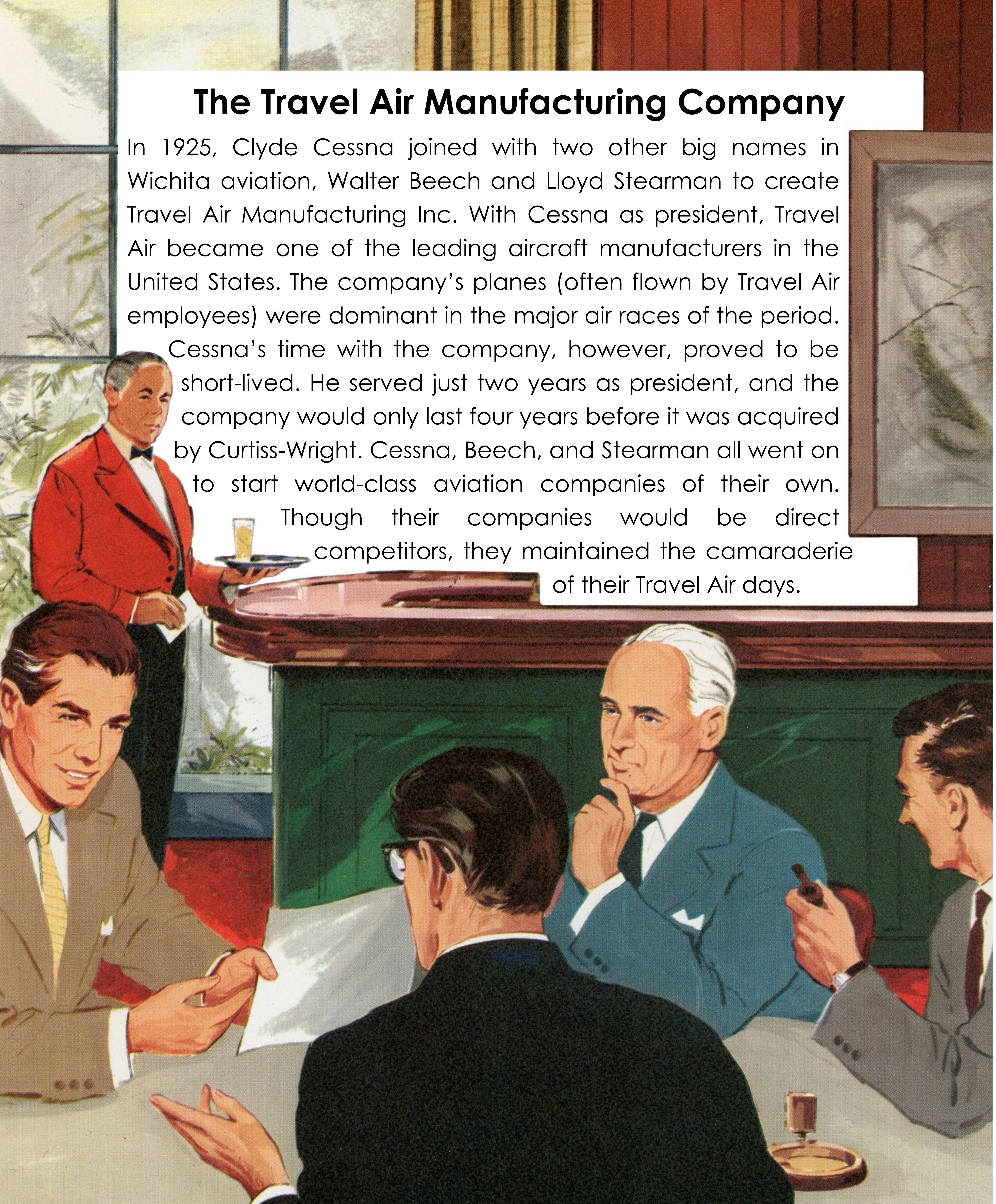


# The Travel Air Manufacturing Company

In 1925, Clyde Cessna joined with two other big names in Wichita aviation, Walter Beech and Lloyd Stearman to create Travel Air Manufacturing Inc. With Cessna as president, Travel Air became one of the leading aircraft manufacturers in the United States. The company's planes (often flown by Travel Air employees) were dominant in the major air races of the period.

Cessna's time with the company, however, proved to be short-lived. He served just two years as president, and the company would only last four years before it was acquired by Curtiss-Wright. Cessna, Beech, and Stearman all went on to start world-class aviation companies of their own.

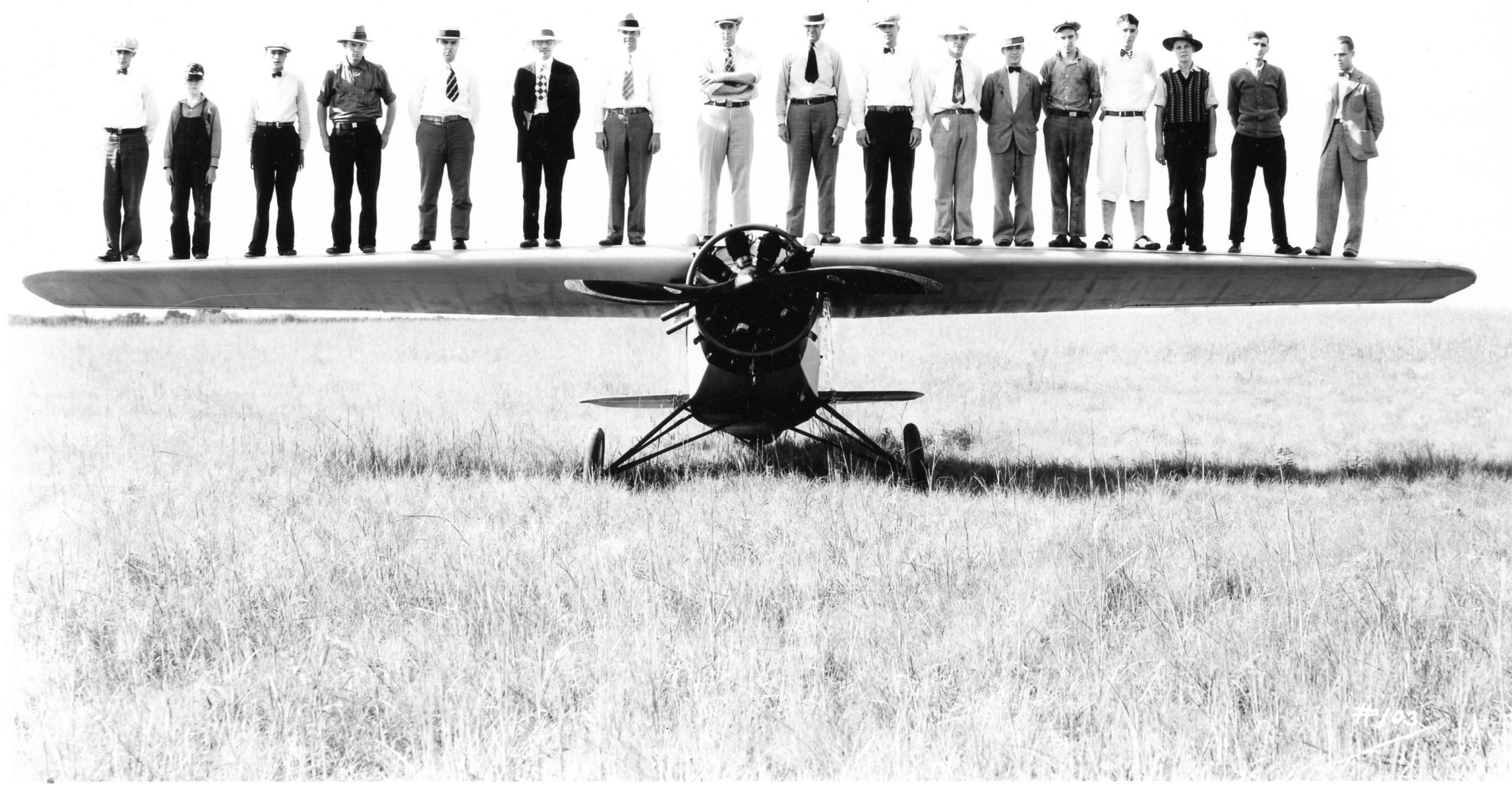
Though their companies would be direct competitors, they maintained the camaraderie of their Travel Air days.





## Cessna's Monoplane Dream

Since his first success with the Silverwing in 1911, Clyde Cessna was convinced that monoplanes, not biplanes, were the way of the future. Though he was able to design the Model 5000 at Travel Air, many in the 1920s believed monoplanes to be structurally unsafe. Unlike monoplanes which have one set of wings, Biplanes have two sets of wings that can be braced against each other for added strength. However, Cessna's high mounted monoplane design proved its reliability in 1927, when a Cessna became the first airplane to fly from California to Hawaii. Of course, Clyde's belief that monoplanes were the way of the future has been



Cessna was a skilled promoter that organized demonstrations such as this to prove the strength of his monoplanes.

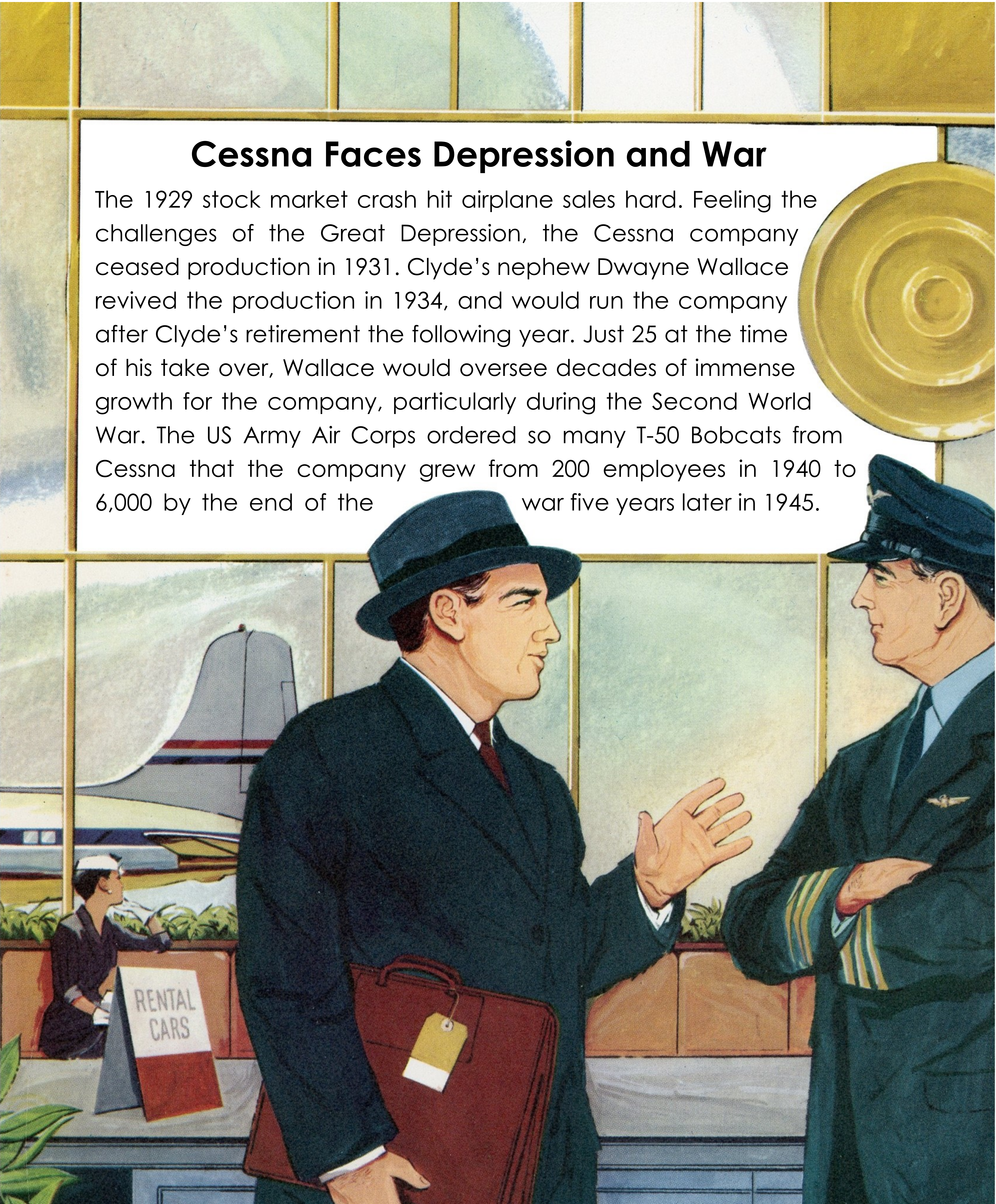
completely vindicated, now that nearly all modern airplanes are monoplanes.





## Cessna Faces Depression and War

The 1929 stock market crash hit airplane sales hard. Feeling the challenges of the Great Depression, the Cessna company ceased production in 1931. Clyde's nephew Dwayne Wallace revived the production in 1934, and would run the company after Clyde's retirement the following year. Just 25 at the time of his take over, Wallace would oversee decades of immense growth for the company, particularly during the Second World War. The US Army Air Corps ordered so many T-50 Bobcats from Cessna that the company grew from 200 employees in 1940 to 6,000 by the end of the war five years later in 1945.







## Cessna Faces Depression and War

Under the leadership of Dwayne Wallace, the Cessna company dominated the general aviation market. Cessna planes were exported around the world, where they were known for their durability and versatility. For much of the Twentieth Century Cessna made more planes than any other company, and by 1975 they became the first manufacturer to build 100,000 planes. In 1985 the company was acquired by General Dynamics, and later by Textron in 1992. Under Textron, Cessna was reunited with Beechcraft in a move that called to mind Clyde Cessna's days with Walter Beech at Travel Air. After leaving control of the company to his nephew in 1935, Clyde finally did make good on his promise to put away the fast paced life of an aviator. He returned once again to simple tranquility of his family farm in Rago,

where he worked  
until he suffered  
a fatal heart  
attack in 1954.

