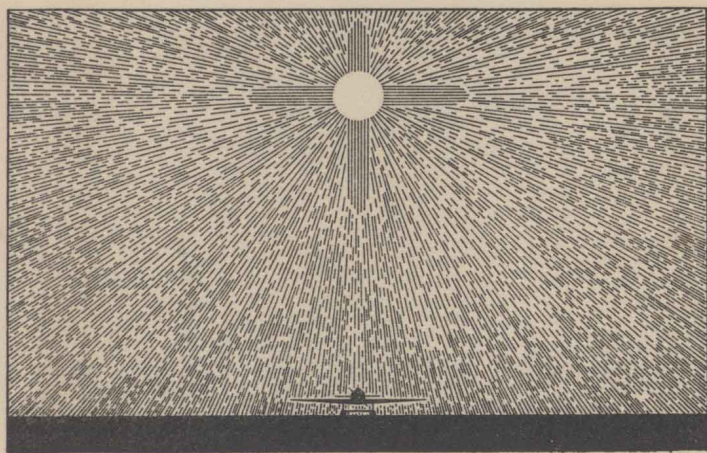


LISTEN! THE WIND



Listen! the Wind

BY ANNE MORROW LINDBERGH

WITH FOREWORD AND MAP DRAWINGS BY
CHARLES A. LINDBERGH

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first edition

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FOREWORD

BY CHARLES A. LINDBERGH

LISTEN! THE WIND" is the story of a survey flight around the North Atlantic Ocean in 1933. It is a true and accurate account of various incidents which occurred in flying from Africa to South America. The purpose of the flight was to study the air-routes between America and Europe. At that time, the air-routes of the world were entering their final stage of development. The countries had already been crossed and the continents connected. It remained only for the oceans to be spanned. Their great over-water distances constituted the last major barrier to the commerce of the air.

The North Atlantic is the most important, and also the most difficult to fly, of all the oceans crossed by the trade routes of men. Distance and climate have combined to place obstacles in the path of those who wish to travel over it. Where the distance is short, the climate is severe, as in the north; while in the south, great distances counteract the advantages of a milder season. There are three natural air-routes across the North Atlantic.

They may be designated as the "Greenland Route" in the north, the "Azores Route" in the south, and the "Great Circle Route" in the center. We were to survey them all.

Our flight began at New York in July, and after following the "Great Circle Route" to Newfoundland, turned north along the coast of Labrador. We crossed to Europe over the "Northern Route," making our first continental landing at Copenhagen. The following weeks were spent in the countries of Europe, and in flights along the coasts of Norway, Scotland, Ireland, Spain, and Portugal.

We reached the Azores too late in the year to fly to Newfoundland or Bermuda with the facilities which then existed. The risk would have been unnecessarily great. So, after a few days in these islands, we set our course south to Africa and the less difficult route which passes over the equator to South America. *Listen! the Wind* is written about our homeward trip, or rather that portion of it which lay between Africa and South America. It describes the people we met and the problems we encountered in making a long over-water flight without advance organization and with a plane originally constructed for continental flying.

Our plane, the *Tingmissartoq*¹ was designed

¹ Named in Greenland for the Eskimo cry when a plane is sighted—"Tingmissartoq" (the one who flies like a big bird).

in 1929 for survey flying over continental routes. As a landplane, in 1930, it had broken the trans-continental record between California and New York. In 1931, the wheels were replaced with pontoons for a flight over the Arctic route to the Orient. Two years later, a more powerful engine was installed, and the plane equipped for our trip over the air-routes of the Atlantic.

It was necessary to be as independent as possible of outside assistance. In 1933, there were no facilities for aircraft at most of the places where we landed. In fact we considered ourselves fortunate when we found a good anchorage and a well-placed buoy to moor to. We followed no predetermined route, and the time we spent in each place depended upon the conditions we encountered and the interest we found in that area. We often reached our destination without advance information about landing conditions. If they were bad, as at Madeira, we continued on to some other location. We never took off without having alternate destinations within our range.

This type of flying necessitated unusual reserves, both in fuel and in emergency equipment. On most flights our plane was heavily overloaded when measured by conventional standards. Our safety lay not in dogmatic formulas of performance and structure, but in the proper balance of constantly changing factors. Sometimes safety lay

in a quick take-off, as among the icebergs at Angmagssalik; sometimes in a long range, as for our flight across the Atlantic to Brazil. And always in extra rations and emergency equipment.

We carried two complete and independent radio sets, one of which was waterproof and fitted into a rubber sailboat. We traded part of our plane's performance for additional days of food and water, for guns, for a bug-proof tent, and for all the many items which are needed when an emergency arises.

As a result, we had the best radio communication ever obtained in many of the areas we flew over. A forced landing, either on land or at sea, would have left us in a position to live, to travel, and to communicate. And in the thirty thousand miles of our flight we were never without an adequate reserve of fuel in our tanks.

We encountered the main disadvantage from our heavy load in taking off. To take off with full tanks, we needed a good wind and a long stretch of sheltered water.

Our flight lasted for nearly six months. This book covers only ten days of that time. It is about a period in aviation which is now gone, but which was probably more interesting than any the future will bring. As times passes, the perfection of machinery tends to insulate man from contact

with the elements in which he lives. The "stratosphere" planes of the future will cross the ocean without any sense of the water below. Like a train tunneling through a mountain, they will be aloof from both the problems and the beauty of the earth's surface. Only the vibration from the engines will impress the senses of the traveler with his movement through the air. Wind and heat and moonlight take-offs will be of no concern to the transatlantic passenger. His only contact with these elements will lie in accounts such as this book contains.

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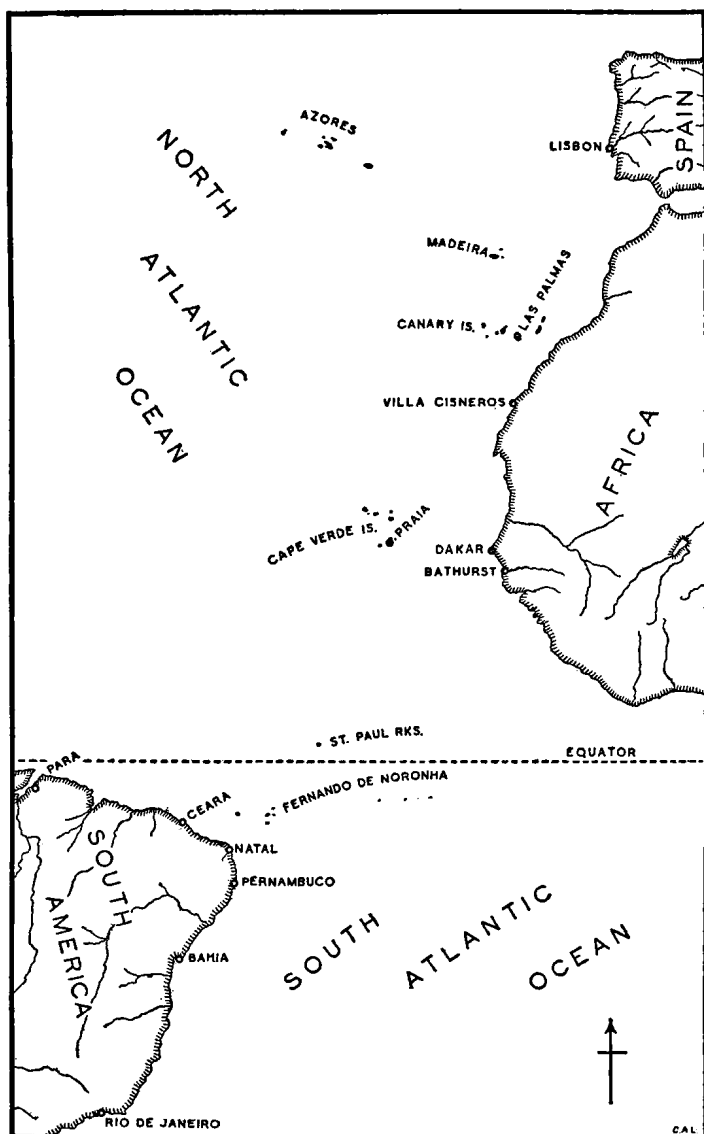
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PART 1

SANTIAGO



CHAPTER I

TAIL WIND

TAIL WIND—I looked down over the side of the plane at the long white streaks in the water below us. White streamers, irregular as raveled threads and yet all pointing in one direction, all paralleling the course of the plane from the coast of Africa southwest to the Cape Verde Islands. The wind had helped us ever since we left the Azores; pushing behind our backs, roaring at our heels, whistling in the cowlings; carrying us along in its stream as a boat is carried on its last stretch home, going “before the wind” with the sail full out, not making any effort of its own, being wafted along on a great tide, swiftly and easily.

So we had come from Spain. Last night outside the tents of the Moors on that dry spit of desert Africa; the night before at Las Palmas in the Canary Islands, among the bazaars and shops, the docks and markets of that old crossroad of the east and west. One jump back from Las Palmas and we had been at the Azores, stepping stones in the Atlantic. One jump before that, Lisbon.

So we had come by giant strides: Horta, Ponta Delgada, Las Palmas, Rio de Oro. And always the wind filling up our cups to overflowing, giving us a little more time, a little more fuel than we expected. The wind—which one can never count on, which sometimes, bearing down on one wing or on another, lures one imperceptibly out of one's course. Or, towering in one's face, makes the flight a long uphill climb, draining away the precious daylight, devouring the fuel. This wind, usually so perverse, uncontrollable, and fickle, had been ours for two thousand miles. Miraculously, it had been ours to count upon as though, like the old story of Odysseus, some god had imprisoned in a bag of ox's skin all opposing winds, leaving free only that one which was to take us home.

For we were on our way home. Our survey flight of the North Atlantic was over. A summer in Greenland and Iceland, an early fall in the mists and rains of Europe. Copenhagen, Stavanger, Southampton, the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, Spain and Portugal, the Azores—all jumping-off places for new routes to America—had been touched and passed. Then down the coast of Africa (leaving the cold and rain behind, breaking out of the clouds into clear skies, a hot sun, and prevailing winds) for our last lap across the Atlantic.

It was a long jump, that last one, sixteen hun-

dred miles from the Cape Verde Islands to the coast of South America. But that one flight, that sustained stretch of twelve hours over the ocean, would put us out of one hemisphere and into another. We would be in America. How soon? Day after tomorrow night, I wondered, would that gigantic step be behind us? A week from today where would we be, I mused, looking down at those innumerable little white ripples in a dazzling sea. Somewhere on the coast of South America, on a regular airline, over territory we had crossed before? Paramaribo—Georgetown—Trinidad—all familiar names, familiar places—on our way home.

It seemed unbelievable. And yet no miracle would surprise me today, I felt, sitting on the top of the sky, the wind at our backs, the horizon opening up clear and void before us—dazzlingly clear, the blue arch burned white by the brilliance of the sun. With the great strides of the summer's flight behind us, and the wide limitless sky ahead, there was no end to our powers. Yesterday we had passed Europe; today we touched Africa; tomorrow we would be in America.

Only one step more, and our jumping-off place in the Cape Verde Islands was ahead of us. These bare, brown, broken-off scraps of the African continent are two hundred miles nearer to South America than the closest part of Africa. It is over

eighteen hundred miles from Dakar, on the bulge of Africa, to Natal on the bulge of South America. But from Santiago, a small island in the Cape Verde group, to Natal is only about sixteen hundred. The difference between sixteen hundred and eighteen hundred miles was, for our plane, a difference between having a good fuel reserve and having barely enough to make the flight in safety; between making a normal cruising speed and having to throttle down to a much slower speed in order to conserve gasoline; between a daylight flight and one which encroached upon darkness. It was the difference, in fact, between an easy flight and a difficult one.

So it was with great satisfaction, earlier in the summer, that my husband, studying the charts of the Atlantic, measuring distances, looking up harbors, decided that we should be able to take off from a southern island of the Cape Verde group. Although the charts showed no land-locked harbor, Porto Praia seemed fairly well sheltered from the prevailing wind. And, most encouraging of all, it had a seaplane base for the French transatlantic service. Refueling arrangements had been made; our course laid out; our radio schedules planned with the South American stations. All that remained for us was to land at Porto Praia, to refuel, to set out, and then—with a tail wind—with a tail wind . . .

CHAPTER II

COULD WE LAND?

MY husband rocked the plane to attract my attention; then passed back a message for me to send out by radio.

“POSITION 13:00 GMT

17° 40' N

20° 40' W

BOAVISTA SIGHTED [Why, yes, there they were—soft gray bumps on the horizon ahead—the Cape Verde Islands.] WILL LAND PORTO PRAIA ABOUT 15:00.”

Only two hours more, and it was just noon. Tail wind, of course—

The islands at first looked like most islands seen at a distance, nebulous, soft and gray, as though made of the same substance as the ocean; a row of waves a little higher than the neighboring waves, caught at their crests momentarily, soon to sink down among their equals again. But gradually they took a more definite shape. The crests of the waves became fixed, their shapes asymmetrical. Their color, too, separated from