



Flying Key Brothers and Their Flight to Remember

Stephen Owen

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From author's Preface: "...On July 1, 1935, exactly thirty-two years, six months, and fifteen days after the Wrights' maiden voyage, two pilots in Meridian, Mississippi, proved to the world just how far an airplane could fly and how much it and its pilots could endure. When their tiny, single-engine Curtiss Robin airplane, named the 'Ole Miss' for the state of Mississippi, landed before a wildly enthusiastic crowd of between 30,000 and 40,000 well-wishers, Al and Fred Key had stayed above the earth longer than any other human beings. For 653 hours and 34 minutes - a total of twenty-seven nonstop days and nights - the brothers had circled the city of Meridian. Had their flight been in a straight line, they would have circumnavigated the globe more than twice. Not until 1973 would man stay above the earth longer. It took a NASA Skylab II mission with a multibillion dollar budget to break the Keys' record, and to this day their intra-atmospheric flight record has not been broken for the class of aircraft they flew. Over the years many articles have told parts of the Key Brothers' story in magazines and newspapers. Two aviation history books have each devoted single chapters to their third endurance flight, and their mother wrote a short, forty-page biography of her famous sons. However, a comprehensive work has never been written about the Keys' numerous accomplishments with airplanes. During 1985 - the 50th anniversary of their record-breaking endurance flight - I can think of no better way to praise these pioneer aviators than to present the inspiring story of their struggles to win the world's endurance flight record and to record their other fascinating contributions as civilian and military aviators...." Softcover, 6 x 9 inches, 145 pages, illustrated with black and white photos, with footnotes, appendices, bibliography.

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