

# TIME

DEC. 31, 1923

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## AERONAUTICS

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### Fokker

There arrived in the U. S. on board the *Berengeria* two gentlemen of the air. One was the Duke of Sutherland, British Under Secretary of State for Air; the other, Anthony H. G. Fokker, Dutch aircraft designer, a name which most airmen fighting the Central Powers in the Great War can hardly pass over without an involuntary shudder.

Short, stocky, robust, Anthony H. G. Fokker looks like a typical Dutchman, with the rosy complexion of his race, a calm but somewhat stubborn look in his blue eyes. He can speak English perfectly, but pretends he cannot and, through shyness or perhaps caution, generally allows someone to interpret for him. His heavy build does not prevent him from being most active and energetic as a pilot, or from rushing rapidly 'round the field of a flying meet busily taking pictures with a neat little kine-camera. (He has the most extensive collection of aeroplane moving pictures in the world.) Only 33 years of age, he has achieved a fortune of several millions in real money, a world reputation and—he has married one of the most beautiful women in Holland.

Many pilots in the war remember with bitterness the Fokker D VII, which in German hands brought down so many pilots. At the outbreak of the War he offered his services to the British Government, received a flat turn down, and was received with open arms by the Germans, who gave him *carte blanche* for experimentation and received their most effective fighting planes in return. Although he was refused permission to exhibit at Paris in Dec., 1922, Fokker has never sworn his Dutch nationality, was never in the German military service and has established the most cordial relations with the United States and British Air Services.

Fokker is not a mathematician or aerodynamicist. But he can design his own ships, build them in his shops and test them himself. It is this wonderful combination of practical gifts, together with great firmness of character which have earned him success. Besides his famous fighting planes, the T-2, which Macready and Kelly flew across the continent, stands to his credit. The Royal Dutch Air Line operates with Fokker machines and has never had a casualty. Fokker has also built and flown the only two-seater glider in existence, and his cantilever wing construction, with its avoidance of all struts and wires, is generally recognized as of great value in increasing the commercial efficiency of aircraft.

Fokker is in the U. S. again on his third visit since the War. He has sold **many machines to both the Army and Navy** and has established himself solidly. The Dutch fear greatly that they will lose him because of the larger possibilities of the U. S. This fear is not ungrounded. Fokker is negotiating for the purchase of one of the largest aircraft factories, and is studying an air route from Detroit to Chicago and St. Louis. American manufacturers regard him with very mixed feelings. They dread his competition in securing Government contracts, but would be delighted to see him use his unique experience in air transportation in an experimental air-line venture here.

Whether this enterprising Dutchman makes his home in the U. S. or not, he is certainly out for business all over the world. He expects world-wide use of the aeroplanes, and in five or ten years thinks that it will be possible to cross the ocean in less than one day as safely as liners do now in five. There is no doubt that when that day comes, Fokker will still be one of the most prominent names in commercial aviation.

