

LIEUT. KELLY KILLED; HIS AIRSHIP WRECKED

**Army Airman Suffers Fractured
Skull in Fall at San Antonio
and Dies an Hour Later.**

CARTER AND STAFF PRESENT

**Only Up Five Minutes When Mishap
in Control Equipment Prevented His
Shutting Off Power.**

Special to The New York Times.

SAN ANTONIO, Texas, May 10.—Second Lieut. George E. M. Kelly of the United States Signal Corps, one of the four army aviators on duty with the division of regulars mobilized here, was killed this morning when a Curtiss aeroplane he was flying got beyond control, after which it ran through the air for over a hundred yards, and crashed to the ground, burying Lieut. Kelly in its wreckage.

The machine was reduced to splinters, the only parts of it left intact being the engine and the rear plane work. Lieut. Kelly suffered a fractured skull and died in the Fort Sam Houston Hospital an hour later. He never regained consciousness. The accident happened about 7:30 this morning, in full view of Gen. Carter and his staff and hundreds of soldiers.

The exact cause of the accident will probably never be known, although the board of officers from the Signal Corps who investigated the accident are of the opinion that it was due to a break in some part of the controlling mechanism, making it impossible for Kelly to shut off the power when he realized his peril.

The accident happened about one hundred yards from Gen. Carter's headquarters. The young officer had been in the air about five minutes, and Major Squier, Chief Signal Corps officer, had commented on the fine flight he was making, when the aviator pointed his machine downward for the purpose of making a landing. The machine was going at a speed estimated at between forty and fifty miles an hour. It shot down, apparently under perfect control, and landed a few feet away from one of the main driveways that intersect the mobilization camp. Kelly could be seen working frantically at the steering wheel as the machine descended, and when it struck the ground everybody breathed a sigh of relief, believing the officer was safe.

But the unexpected happened. The machine ran along the ground for ten or fifteen yards and then the fork into which is fitted the front wheel, struck some obstruction and a moment later the propeller began to revolve at a wild speed. It could be seen that the left part of the machine was absolutely beyond the control of the aviator. It suddenly shot forward for several yards, and then ascended to an altitude of between fifteen and twenty feet. It darted through the air in the direction of the Eleventh Infantry camp, tumbling and rolling like a wounded bird. The officer could be seen working at the broken controller, but those who witnessed the sight say that at no time did he have a chance to escape with his life.

The machine gave a last tumble in the air and fell with a crash to the ground. Kelly was pitched out just as it started downward. The aviator and the machine struck the ground at the same instant.

Major Squier, Lieut. Foulois, Frank Coffyn, the Wright aviator, and a trooper were the first to reach the side of the dying aviator, whose skull was crushed. He lay under the wreckage of one of the planes, his face to the ground. The ambulance came up a moment later. Lieut. Foucar of the Medical Corps, in charge of the ambulance, examined Lieut. Kelly and informed Major Squier that he was mortally hurt.

By this time a troop of the Third Cavalry galloped up and formed a cordon around the place where Kelly lay dying. Lieut. Foucar, aided by troopers, picked him up and hurried him to the hospital, where Major Hutton, the Chief Surgeon, after examining him said there was no chance to save his life. An hour and ten minutes later he died.

Others near when Kelly was killed, besides Gen. Carter, were Col. Stephen Mills, Chief of Staff; Lieut. Col. Ladd, the Adjutant General, and Col. Birmingham, Col. Straub, Capt. Leonard, and Capt. Craig, all of the division staff. The whole camp knew of the accident within a few minutes after it had happened, and on all sides the deepest feelings of regret were expressed for the unfortunate aviator, who was one of the most popular members of the army corps.

As soon as order was restored Major Squier appointed a board of three signal officers to investigate the accident. Lieut. Paul W. Beck, chief of the corps, was President of the board, the other members being Lieut. Foulois and Lieut. Walker. After a hearing that lasted several hours the board reported that atmospheric conditions were good at the time of the accident, that Kelly's first landing was a good one, and that the cause of the accident was due to a break in some part of the control equipment which made impossible the management of the engine and planes. The report has been forwarded to Gen. Ailen, Chief of the Signal Corps, in Washington.

The accident to Lieut. Kelly is the third within the last ten days. All of them befell the same Curtiss aeroplane in which Kelly was flying. Lieut. Walker figured in the first accident. On that occasion, in making a turn, the machine got out of his control and fell 150 feet before it righted itself. Lieut. Beck was the victim of the next accident. He fell over 200 feet and landed in a mesquite tree. The machine was badly wrecked. When Lieut. Kelly went up this morning it was the first time the machine had been in the air since its mishap with Lieut. Beck.

Lieut. Kelly came to San Antonio about six weeks ago with Lieuts. Beck and Walker. All had been receiving instruction from Glenn H. Curtiss at San Diego, Cal., and had certified from Mr. Curtiss, testifying that they were capable aviators. When the Curtiss machine arrived several weeks ago Eugene Ely, one of the Curtiss aviators, was sent here to look after the instruction of Lieuts. Beck, Kelly, and Walker, who had been assigned to fly the machine. Ely left ten days ago to fulfill some exhibition engagements, and is not due back until May 14.

Speaking of the accident this afternoon, Major Squier said that, in his opinion, it was unavoidable.

"Lieut. Kelly," he added, "was one of the best men in the Signal Corps. He was a quiet, unassuming fellow, devoted to his work, and gave every promise of becoming one of the army's most valuable aviators. However, we must all remember that an aviator's life is one in which the danger phase must be considered. Orders have been issued forbidding further flying for the next few days."

Lieut. Kelly was a native of England and joined the army in 1904 as a private in the Coast Artillery. He held every non-commissioned rank from Corporal to Sergeant, and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Thirtieth Infantry in 1907. He was unmarried and is said to have a sister living in New York City. His parents are believed to be in England.

Lieut. Kelly was the second army officer to be killed in an aeroplane. The other was Lieut. Thomas B. Selfridge, who fell with Orville Wright at Fort Myer, Va., in September, 1908.