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wanted

Nearly 59 years ago San Antonians of those war-torn days were attempting to finance the construction of an airship for which a patent had been applied. Tangible proof of this long forgotten incident has been discovered by Ferdinand Herff, chairman of the board of the San Antonio National Bank, while poring over papers left by his father, the late Dr. F. Herff. Under date of June 27, 1865, J. Brodbeck promised to pay Dr. Herff \$5 for four quarter shares at \$1.25 each, for money advanced by the purchaser--the sum payable "six months after the sale of a U. S. patent right for an airship invented by me." These quarter shares, duly signed and in an excellent state of preservation, have been brought to light after at least half a century of sleep. Both the inventor and the man who sought to assist him realized a dream that was not to come true for years long since passed out of the ken of men. The receipts for the money intended to aid Brodbeck become to a country still ill with civil strife what Wilbur and Orville Wright became years later not only interest San Antonio, but form at least a chapter in the long story of the battle to conquer the air. The air has been, in large measure at least, made to serve the ends of man. Brodbeck did not achieve what he sought. But every effort of those who failed, and Brodbeck was one of the thousand, had something to do with the winning. An idea is never lost, and after the lapse of nearly threescore

years, one still feels admiration for Brodbeck's energy and vision, as well as respect for Dr. Herff's desire to aid science in another way than his celebrated skill as physician and surgeon pointed.

### Action Line



Years ago while visiting some relatives in Fredericksburg, I heard something I have never forgotten. It was that about 100 years ago, a German school teacher lived there, and he played a prominent role in inventing the modern airplane. I don't even know his name, but I thought perhaps Action Line could tell me something about him. I hope you can. — J. Thornton.

**ACTION:** His name was Jacob Brodbeck and he left his classroom in Germany in 1846 to come to Texas. He taught school in Fredericksburg in 1847, and in 1862 served as county surveyor and district school supervisor in Gillespie County.

Brodbeck moved to San Antonio in 1863 and constructed a miniature airplane. It had wings, a rudder, a propeller, and used coil springs for power. Two years later, in 1865, Brodbeck sold shares to finance a company to manufacture a plane that had a propeller screw for water navigation, and wings that were partly movable to make use of air resistance. His creation, he calculated, could travel up to 100 miles an hour.

But Brodbeck was able to get financial backing from only a few influential men, and never got enough to continue his development of the aircraft.

Brodbeck died on his farm near Luckenbach, Jan. 8, 1909.

Here's something that flies back into history: Approximately 500 years before brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright made the first sustained airplane flight at Kitty Hawk, N.C., in 1903. A Florentine genius who was a painter, sculptor, architect, biologist, geologist and engineer, drew sketches of the principles of the helicopter, glider and parachute. This fellow lived from 1452 to 1519. His name: Leonardo da Vinci.

BISQUIC

Early  
Le Sueur Pe  
Ocean Spray  
Cranberry Ju

GRAP

SWEET  
RED TOK  
SNOW WHITE  
FRESH CA  
CRISP  
PASCAL C  
U.S. #1  
RUSSET P

Ocean Spray  
Cranberries  
Fresh  
Spinach

From Kathy  
12/1/71

# Quarter Share

No. 70

\$ 1. 25.

San Antonio, T., June 27th 1865.

Six months after the sale of a U. S. patent right for an airship, invented by me, I promise to pay to *John H. ...* ONE DOLLAR and TWENTY FIVE CENTS, together with his share of One Fourth of the amount received by such sale, expenses deducted, or two months after the term for which a U. S. patent will be granted to me, together with a yearly payment of his share of One Fourth of the profits accrued by the sale of such airships, as the case may be, value received.

*J. H. ...*