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Middletown and Mother

TURNING BACK FROM his easterly heading, Cal Rodgers circled over the Sheepshead Bay field, too occupied with controlling the biplane to relish the thought that he had—at long last!—begun the climb to the upper branches of his family tree. With the planes of the flying machine leveled, he let drop a bundle of leaflets proclaiming that he was on his way to win the \$50,000 Hearst prize under the sponsorship of that ideal grape drink, Vin Fiz. Resenting the commercial intrusion into his private pursuit and, even more, the impudence of Vin Fiz president Charles Davidson, Cal considered dumping the leaflets into the East River. He passed over the automobile from which his mother and sister continued to wave farewell and directed himself toward the Erie Railroad terminal in Jersey City where the Vin Fiz special train awaited.

A Hearst reporter asked Cal's mother her thoughts. "I am certain Calbraith will win," Mrs. Schweitzer insisted. "Of course, I am opposed to my boy's flying. But since he is determined, I want him to succeed. And the Wrights have told me that Calbraith is very careful."

Mrs. Pease, Cal's sister, explained that Cal was a cousin of August Belmont, who, she added, was avidly interested in the flight. "Because Cal