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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

Department Editor.....KURT J. KREMLICK

THE AERONAUTICS BRANCH DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE: ITS HISTORY, ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATION. By Lawrence F. Schmeckebier. (Service Monographs of the United States Government, No. 61.) Washington: Institute for Government Research of the Brookings Institution, 1930. Pp. x, 147.

This terse monograph is a useful compilation of valuable information, largely statistical, concerning the history, make-up and organization of the Aeronautical Branch of the Department of Commerce from the administrative or governmental point of view. The study should prove a valuable introduction for those not initiated in the working of a service which is playing an important role in the development of commercial aviation. The monograph is one of a series of excellent descriptive studies, following a uniform presentation, of various administrative services of the federal government. Valuable statistical material, dated June 30, 1929, and January 1, 1930, is assembled concerning certain phases of the service about which information has hitherto not been readily accessible.

Chapter one, entitled "History," is largely introductory, enumerates the outstanding events in the early growth of aviation, and treats cursorily the early attempts to regulate flying and the struggles encountered in securing the passage of the Air Commerce Act of 1926, the provisions of which are set forth in the appendix. The powers and duties of the Assistant Secretary of Commerce in charge of Aeronautics are next summarized and the progress of aviation under the tutelage of the service is briefly attempted by a selection of charts.

The "Activities" of the Aeronautics Branch are described in the second chapter in considerable detail under twelve major classifications. While the author deals with this material more satisfactorily than the historical aspects of the service, his treatment at times is confused rather than clarified by the valuable comparative tables inserted throughout the chapter. Many pages are devoted to the regulations of the department in regard to the licensing of pilots and the classifying of airports which are valuable in such a study merely as illustrations of the detailed manner in which the service is carrying into effect its duties. The Legal Section of the Branch (p. 95) is one that is inadequately treated. Only a few of its activities are mentioned. No mention is made of its efforts to encourage uniform state laws.

The last chapter on "Organization" sets forth in a none too lucid manner the administrative divisions and subdivisions of the

Branch, their duties and interrelations. An appreciable amount of material previously given is repeated or referred to in explaining the duties of the various sub-units.

The six appendices give statistical matter of varying value; the first gives the personnel and salaries of each office in the Branch on January, 1930; the second gives a classification of activities, fourteen in number as compared with twelve employed in chapter two; the third describes the publications, current and discontinued, issued by the Branch; the fourth gives a verbatim copy of the Air Commerce Act of 1926 along with several minor Acts; the fifth tabulates a financial statement showing only the appropriations for the years 1927-30; and the last sets out a selected bibliography of literature written about the activities and policies of the Aeronautics Branch.

The study presents a great deal of valuable material about the activities and organization of the Aeronautics Branch from the administrative point of view, which agency is the hub, under the Act of 1926, of the extensive governmental regulation of the aviation industry. The monograph probably presents the clearest picture of the detailed workings of the Aeronautics Branch now attainable although the reader must be cautioned not to be deceived by the all too brief treatment of the subject.

EDWARD C. SWEENEY.

1931 UNITED STATES AVIATION REPORTS. Edited by Arnold W. Knauth, Henry G. Hotchkiss, and Emory H. Niles. Baltimore: J. H. Furst Co., 1931. Pp. xxx, 526.

This is the fourth volume of the series of reports in which the editors undertook in 1928 to publish each year one volume containing all the decisions, statutes, and regulations relating to air law made in that year. It reports many opinions not officially reported and also contains valuable documents, of a miscellaneous nature, relating to air law.

A distinctive feature of the fourth volume is the set of cumulative tables printed on pink paper containing the following: First, a cumulative table of cases (1928-1931); Second, a cumulative table of federal statutes and regulations (1919-1931); and Third, a cumulative table of state and territorial aviation statutes and regulations (1913-1931).

The first 238 pages contain some forty decisions and opinions of various state attorney generals. The greatest number of cases are concerned with the taxation of gasoline and the question of carrier negligence, although litigation has involved almost every problem in aeronautical law. The editing has been done carefully and the cases are conveniently grouped under various subheads.

Following the cases reported in full is a Supplementary List of Cases (Pp. 239-243) with syllabi. The section on Federal Statutes and Regulations (Pp. 247-258) follows, containing: (1) Amendments to the Air Commerce Regulations; (2) Amend-

ments more particularly relating to Interstate Passenger Air Transport Services; and (3) Interpretations of these regulations, as set forth in Aeronautics Bulletin No. 7-E.

The Report of the American Bar Association Committee on Aeronautical Law for 1931 occupies pages 258-279, and contains a discussion of the Uniform Aeronautical Code and the Uniform Airports Act, proposed by the Committee. The American Law Institute Restatement of the Law of Torts, insofar as it deals with trespass of air space, gives (Pp. 280-296) the text of the tentative draft submitted May 7, 1931, the comment, the illustrations, and the excellent explanatory notes by the Reporter, Mr. Thurston. State Statutes and Regulations of 1931 occupy pages 299-482. Finally, there is the very good Index-Digest of all the material in the volume; this index is unusually complete and useful, containing, for example, four pages of index to definitions. Apparently the editors have not seen fit to make a Cumulative Index-Digest, as suggested in 2 JOURNAL OF AIR LAW 292. The addition of such a table would add immeasurably to the value of the series and would well be worth the extra pages required therefor.

Containing all the decisions, statutes, regulations, miscellaneous documents, tables, and indices that it does, this volume adds materially to the improvements made each year in the series, and, together with the previous volumes in the series, is invaluable as a source book and a search book for those interested in the law of aviation.

ABRAHAM FISHMAN.

TRANSPORT AVIATION. (2nd edition.) By Archibald Black. New York: Simmons-Boardman Publishing Company, 1929. Pp. vi, 348.

The second edition of this book is, as the author states, not merely a reprint of the former volume but is, instead, almost a completely new book. Eight chapters have been added in this edition which deal with the importance of accounting, estimating of costs, traffic development, insurance, investment, law and radio. The finished product is a most comprehensive handbook of transport aviation. In its twenty-four chapters will be found a careful study of almost every problem confronting the air transport companies. The chapters are necessarily brief and doubtless later editions of the volume will deal in a more detailed way with some of the more important problems. But this new edition offers one of the most valuable studies that has yet been made of the air transport field.

With only one chapter devoted to aeronautical law—which chapter consists of some nine pages—the lawyer will find little of assistance. But undoubtedly, in a volume of general scope and limited pages, more space should not be devoted to a study of the legal problems.

F. D. F.

AIR TRANSPORT OPERATION. By Wesley L. Smith. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1931. Pp. ix, 316.

From the chapter arrangement and from the detailed presentation of the various chapters, it is obvious that this book is written by one who has had an intimate contact with actual flying operations and that it is designed to be of particular use to pilots and those actively engaged in flying on the various air transport lines.

The twelve chapters are so arranged that the discussion opens with a study of airways, meteorology, radio, air ports, etc. There are also chapters devoted to airplanes, motors, and instruments suitable for air transport operation. The last two chapters dealing with ground and flight procedure seem almost to be written for those who are piloting aircraft. The chapter on organization, which is one of the longest in the volume, sketches a sample organization without much detailed analysis.

If this volume is intended to cover the various phases of air transport operation, no critic could fail to note several deficiencies. Almost the whole book is given over to general problems associated with flying activities and the book is clearly lacking in any comprehensive analysis of the operator's problems—which must be concerned with the financing, cost accounting, and such other topics as pertain to traffic promotion, advertising, etc. The book will be found useful provided one can supplement the information here given, with other studies.

F. D. F.

AIRCRAFT RADIO. By Myron F. Eddy. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1931. Pp. x, 284.

Written in a semi-technical style, this volume offers, in its nine chapters, a very excellent summary of the various radio problems associated with aeronautics.

The opening chapters, which are purely of an introductory nature, deal with the fundamental principles of electricity and the application to radio. Two chapters (7 and 8) are most important for those interested in aviation. These concern the radio aids to navigation and the details of equipping an aircraft with radio. There is a final chapter (9) which offers the various statutes and regulations covering the use of aircraft radio.

While there is little of interest in this volume to the average lawyer, it will be found to be invaluable to those interested in the regulatory phases, since it is impossible to consider the question of radio control until one is familiar with the fundamentals of radio physics. In presenting this material in a clear and understandable manner, the author has rendered a distinct service.

F. D. F.

SAFETY IN THE AIR. By Frederick W. Grantham. Los Angeles: The Wolfer Printing Company, 1931. Pp. 203.

The reader who anticipates a study of the various problems associated with safety in aeronautics will be considerably disappointed in this volume, for while written under an intriguing title the book seems, at first blush, to contain additional propaganda in behalf of lighter-than-air craft. The first forty pages trace the rise of air transportation through its evolutionary phases. Some additional forty pages, given to aviation, contain matter which is also largely historical.

That the author dismisses airplane transportation with a wave of the hand is obvious when we read on page 78 that "Most of the people who can afford to ride the airplane will not do so because it is unsafe and will continue to be as long as it depends upon a complicated motor to keep it aloft." His concluding condemnation of the airplane appears on page 81 wherein the author says, "Safety is the one thing most needed in commercial aircraft today, and it would appear that it is the one thing that present day airplanes cannot acquire. As long as a machine depends on an intricate motor to keep it aloft it is not safe. The airplane may be likened to a sheet of metal equipped with a motor that will safely skim over the water until such a time as the motor stops at which point it will make a nose dive to destruction, for an airplane will also be safe in the air only as long as its motor lasts."

Having discussed very briefly the airplane and having concluded that it has no future as a transportation medium, the author then devotes six pages to a more rosy picture of lighter-than-air craft as a potential transportation medium.

It is not the purpose of the reviewer to here question the intentions of the author nor validity of his conclusions with regard to the future of lighter-than-air transportation, but it should be pointed out that this book has little to do with the subject of its title and is most superficial in its conclusions. To dismiss the airplane so glibly as the author does on page 194 in saying, "The airplane results then as a total loss when considered as a common carrier and it is definitely not suitable for transportation purposes," is to raise considerable doubt as to the validity of his conclusions relative to any form of transportation.

F. D. F.

CRUISERS OF THE AIR. By C. J. Hylander. New York: MacMillan Company, 1931. Pp. xxiv, 308.

This volume presents in a brief compass "The story of lighter-than-air craft from the days of Roger Bacon to the making of the ZRS-4."

Following a thoroughly interesting preface by Hon. David S. Ingalls, Assistant Secretary of Navy for Aeronautics, the author presents in a straightforward and readable manner the story of

lighter-than-air craft. The approach is historical and the successive developments are traced in a most intriguing manner. No one can read this short book without a tremendously increasing respect for the possibilities of lighter-than-air transportation. The discussion is not technical and does not go into financial detail but it presents one of the most comprehensive pictures of the evolution of lighter-than-air craft as a transportation medium that has yet appeared.

To the lawyer who is at present almost entirely concerned with regulations pertaining to aviation, this volume will offer much by way of information as to what can be expected of regulation when this newer and growing form of transportation assumes its rightful place.

F. D. F.