

A.T.C. #100
(1-29)
TRAVEL AIR, MODEL 6000



Fig. 312. The "Travel Air" Model 6000 carried six in comfort, designed to meet the needs of business firms and smaller air lines.

Walter Beech and his enthusiastic crew at "Travel Air" let it be known that they were mighty proud of the model "6000" when it was introduced early in 1928; they were proud and justifiably so, because it was a big beautiful airplane that incorporated the very latest features expressly designed to promote a better acceptance of the convenience and comfort of travel by air. They even went so far as to dub it the "Limousine of the Air" and it was, in a sense, with its roomy interior and pleasant appointments that were coupled to an air about it that could be best described as luxurious efficiency, whether on the ground or flying.

Pictured here in the various illustrations, we see this "buxom beauty" as a strut braced high wing cabin monoplane of rather large proportions and typical of "Travel Air" construction and basic configuration features, with modifications and improvements added that were later found lacking in the earlier "Travel Air" monoplane, the Model 5000. The new Model 6000 provided ample seating for six, and all were fully enclosed in the cabin section. In many instances previous, the pilot was more or less isolated from his passengers, but it was now being considered as appropriate that to promote a more friendly atmosphere and a spirit of camaradie, it would

be better to have the pilot visible and accessible to the whims of the passengers.

The powerplant selected for the Model 6000 was the popular nine cylinder Wright "Whirlwind" J5 engine of 220 h.p., the engine was muffled fairly well and the cabin walls were insulated and sound-proofed to keep noise and vibrations at a fairly low level. Conversing in an airplane aloft at practically a shout, was considered a little old-fashioned by now! The performance of this big beauty was among the best of its type and its agility both in the air and on the ground was surprising for a ship of this type and size. They at "Travel Air" were "plugging" this one often and well, and its various merits were soon recognized; it sold quite well to numerous business-firms and to a number of the newer air-lines around the country. The type certificate number for the Model 6000 was issued in January of 1929 and this model was soon offered with other engine installations listed under their appropriate certificate numbers. The model A-6000-A with "Wasp" engine was built under A.T.C. #116; the model B-6000 with 300 h.p. "Whirlwind Nine" was built under A.T.C. #130.

Although only remotely similiar in appearance, the Model 6000 was actually a development of the earlier 5 place Model 5000 which



Fig. 313. 1928 prototype version of the "Travel Air" Model 6000, proudly announced as the "Limousine of the air".

was a strut braced high wing cabin monoplane of the "Woolaroc" type; an airplane made famous by Art Goebel on his flight across the Pacific Ocean to Hawaii in winning the famous (or infamous, depending on view) "Dole Derby" in August of 1927. Discussion of Grp. 2 approval numbered 2-27 will carry details of this airplane, etc. The Travel Air "Model 5000" is pictured here in one of the views.

The production model of the 6000 that was built under this certificate number, and is shown here, was already improved and modified over the prototype version with features found

more suitable to promises extended. Notable among these improvements was an enlarged cabin section for more elbow room, with roll-down windows, removable seats for hauling cargo, and non-shatter safety glass in the pilot's section of the cabin. The tail-skid was replaced with a 14 x 3 steerable tail-wheel, and the rudder shape was modified with a cut-out to suit. The Model 6000 was manufactured by the Travel Air Co. at Wichita, Kan. who was adding new buildings to their plant layout every month or so; it was getting to be the biggest commercial aircraft producer in the country.



Fig. 314. The colorful "Travel Air" Model 5000 was one of the first to offer air-travel in cabin comfort.

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Listed below are specifications and performance data for the "Whirlwind" J5 powered "Travel Air" monoplane Model 6000; wing span 48'6", chord 78", wing area 280 sq. ft., airfoil Clark Y-15, length 30'10", height 9'3", empty wt. 2430, useful load 1670, payload 965, gross wt. 4100 lb., max. speed 120, cruise 102, land 55, climb 650, ceiling 12,000 ft., gas cap. 80 gal., oil 6 gal., range 5½ hours or 560 miles. Price at the factory averaged about \$12,000. The fuselage framework was built up of welded chrome-moly steel tubing, sound-proofed, insulated, faired to shape and fabric covered. The wing framework was built up of spruce box-type spars and spruce and plywood built-up ribs, also fabric covered. Fuel supply was carried in two wing root tanks of 40 gallons each. This version of the Model 6000 used a "prop spinner", some of the later models did not. The fabric covered tail-group was built up of

welded chrome-moly steel tubing, the fin was ground adjustable and the horizontal stabilizer was adjustable in flight. The wide tread landing gear was of the out-rigger type with "oleo" shock-absorber struts. The color scheme was of course optional, but standard colors were black for the fuselage and tail-group, and a bright orange-yellow for the wing; fuselage was striped in chrome-yellow. Metal propeller, inertia-type engine starter, and wheel brakes were standard equipment.

This chapter marks the close of this first volume, a volume depicting the growth of the aircraft industry from a rather shaky and apprehensive start to one that had gained confidence in itself, and began to snow-ball into one of the major industries in this country. Volume Two has us on the threshold of the year 1929, certainly the most memorable and unusual year in the annals of the aircraft industry; it should be interesting and worthwhile to follow this progress.



Fig. 315. Travel Air model "6000" with Wright J5 engine; later converted to model "B-6000" with installation of Wright J6-9-300.

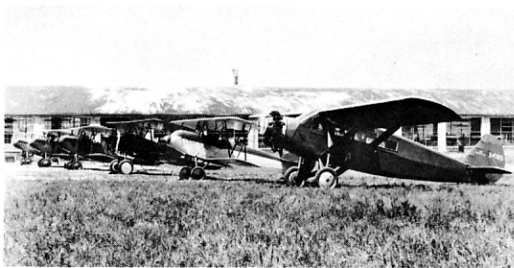


Fig. 316. Line up of "Travel Airs" at factory field; prototype "6000" in foreground.