We piloted the first jet airplane coast-to-coast. This is an account of the trip of the first jet airplane from Buffalo, New York to the flight test center at Muroc, California. Participated in by Frank Burnham, service representative; Angus McEachern, Muroc; and Ted Rogers, test supervisor. We had previously taken the engines to the plant at Bell Aircraft Corp., Buffalo, New York back in August, where we worked installing the engines until late August and then had gone back to Lynn for a short period, prior to going on the actual "flight" as we called it.

Burnham:
Well, Ted, as I remember you and I and Mac left Boston late in the evening. We were rather disappointed that all airplanes were grounded as we had first class priority for the trip. In fact, traveling by air was quite a new thing to me in those days. I had only had rides in small airplanes prior to that time. But, disappointing as it was, we went down to the South Station to the train and arrived in Buffalo at approximately 11:30 at night. Wasn't it, Ted?

Rogers:
Yes. According to the few scattered notes that I have and had I realized that 10 years later we would be re-living it, I would probably would have taken a little better notes. But we can probably piece it together with the few we do have.

Burnham:
I think you and I will be re-living it over and over again. Someday you'll probably be telling this yarn to your grandchildren so maybe it's well we have it fresh in our minds. As I remember you and I went out to the Plant and Mac went to a hotel, he wasn't cleared for Bell Aircraft.

Rogers:
I think they called him an "alien" and wouldn't let him in the plant. He was a Nova Scotia "Blue Nose," wasn't he?

Burnham:
Yes. Well, we did a lot of clean-up work inspecting and making sure that our equipment was protected and properly installed in the crate. Ted, I think that was the time we got the first look at the compressor Truly Warner had sent up from Boston. As I remember, it was a nice red shiny new compressor that he probably coaxed out of somebody. Again as I recall, it cost about $2,000. It seems like a lot of money for just an air supply for a train trip. It was Fram, I believe in fact they are still using it back at the River Works. Is that so?

Rogers:
Yes. It was completely automatic and we thought that was a wonderful piece of equipment.

Burnham:
In fact, we babied that for about seven days. We didn't get any sleep that night and the next day we got Mac cleared. Then there was a big rush for supplies. What did we get that time Ted?

Rogers:
We had to go down to the store and try and get enough food. Neither one of us had done much shopping prior to this and I'm afraid our ideas of food were not what would be called for by a dietician, but we did manage to get a few things, enough to live on. We also got down to Sears and Roebuck and got two mattresses for three of us and two blankets so that one of us would be forced to be on duty because there would be no place for him to sleep.

Burnham:
In those days, Ted, we thought Sterno was for cooking not drinking and we made the big mistake of buying a Sterno stove to cook for what we thought would be three men on the trip.

Rogers:
I think we made a big mistake there, Frank. We were trying to save money for the Company. We probably should have bought a gasoline stove instead of a 25¢ piece of tin Sterno stove. Later events proved that our choice of a stove was not a very good one. Ed insisted, however, that we get the best innerspring mattress we could get. We were determined that if we had to bunk in an old Civil War car at least we were going to have something comfortable to sleep on.

Burnham:
Remember, that night when we got down to the car and started loading the equipment, the Bell Aircraft maintenance men made the crack that we should feel really honored riding in this car because it was the original car from which Abraham Lincoln made the Gettysburg address? Sort of a baggage car — a decrepit piece of machinery! I wondered if it would hold together for the trip.

Rogers:
Matter of fact I wondered if it wasn't obsolete when Lincoln made his address!

Burnham:
It looked old enough and rickety enough to have been a gun carriage.

Rogers:
It sure would have been nice to have had a camera along to take pictures of the car because I haven't seen any kicking around in the past five years or one that even approached it. Quite a relic!

Burnham:
Matter of security remember? I had asked about bringing my camera. You recall the old camera I repaired the lens each time I took a picture! Well, I considered myself quite a shutterbug in those days, with this old box. There was a triple extension bellows made by the Century Camera Co. Out of existence now.

Rogers:
Well, it wouldn't have done much good to have brought that thing along. By the time we would have gotten a