

**THE FOLLOWING IS THE
LESTER J. HENDERSHOT STORY
AS TOLD BY
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My name is Mark Hendershot, and Lester J. Hendershot was my Father.

Lester was an inventor and in his many attempts at producing practical items, he had a moderate success a few times with electronic toys, and had sold some of his ideas to small manufactures. His biggest idea, however, was so revolutionary that it embarrassed the nation's top scientists because they couldn't explain it, and if it could be perfected, it would possibly eliminate the need for public electric utilities in many instances, and it would completely change most of our present concepts of motivation.

His earlier invention was called a "motor" by the newspapers, but it was actually a generator which was powered by the magnetic field of the earth. His later models created enough electricity to simultaneously light a 120 volt light bulb and a table model radio. I witnessed it furnishing the power to run a television set and a sewing machine for hours at a time in our living room.

It was in 1927 and 1928 that my Father began to think seriously about this "fuelless" generator. He had taken up flying in 1925 and he soon realized that the ultimate development of aviation would be greatly enhanced by the creation of an absolutely true and reliable compass, and his first efforts were to producer such an instrument.

He theorized that the magnetic compass did not point to true north and varies from true north to a different extent at almost every point on the earth's surface. Also, the induction compass has to be set before each flight and at that time was not always reliable. He claimed that with a pre-magnetized core he could set up a magnetized field that would indicate the true north, but he did not know just how to utilize that in the compass he had set out to develop.

In continuing his experiments, he found that by cutting the same line of magnetic force north and south, he had an indicator of the true north. By cutting the magnetic field east and west, he could develop a rotary motion.

With this principle in mind, he switched his plans and began working on a motor which utilized this magnetic power. He built one that would rotate at a constant speed, a speed predetermined when the motor was built. It could be built for a desired speed, he said, and he felt that a reliable constant speed motor was one of the greatest needs in aviation at that time. The one built developed 1,800 revolutions per minute.

In the following years, he realized that the idea of a magnetically powered motor was not as practical as a magnetically powered generator, so his later work was directed towards the generator.

To avoid confusion, it should be pointed out that the early experiments began on a magnetically powered MOTOR, and later a GENERATOR.

The first significant experiments on the motor version were held at Selfridge Field, Detroit, under the direction of Major Thomas G. Lanphier, commandant of the field and leader of the First Pursuit Group.

The device demonstrated at Selfridge was a small model of what he hoped would be developed into an aeroplane engine. Quotes in the newspaper referred to top aeronautical brass of the day and their impressions of what they saw.

One such report was credited to William B. Stout, president of the Stout Air Service, Inc., designer of the all-metal type plane used by the Ford Motor Company. Stout's comments were, "The demonstration was very impressive. It was actually uncanny. I would like very much to see a large model, designed to develop enough power to lift an aeroplane."

Major Lanphier's comments to reporters after the demonstrations were, "The whole thing is so mysterious and startling that it has the appearance of being a fake."

"I was extremely sceptical when I saw the first model," he continued, "but I helped to build the second one and witnessed the winding of the magnet. I am sure there was nothing phoney about it."

My Father had first shown the military brass how his model worked, then he supervised army technicians in building their own model, which worked perfectly. Major Lanphier said that the electrical men to whom they had shown the motor..... laughed at the way we wired it up and said it wouldn't work. Then it DID work."

It was the Selfridge Field experiment which touched off the series of stories in the national press. Stories with blaring headlines in such papers as the Detroit Free Press, Detroit News, Detroit Times, Pittsburgh papers, the New York Times, and many others. Most of them tagged the instrument demonstrated at Selfridge the "miracle motor", and there were pictures of Major Lanphier and Col. Lindbergh, my Father and the motor.

Anything in the news during that period which could be connected with Lindbergh was front page whether he had an active interest, or just happened to be in the area at the time. Headlines in the various papers read, "*Gasless Motor Tested for Lindy*", "*Lindy Inspects Fuelless Motor For Aeroplanes*", and "*Lindbergh Tries Motor That The Earth Runs.*" One story even stated that, at its request, Lindbergh and Lanphier were flying to New York to show the motor to the Guggenheim Foundation for the Promotion of Aeronautics.

Later reports, however, emphasized that Lindbergh actually had nothing whatsoever to do with the experiments, and that he had just witnessed a couple of the demonstrations as the guest of his friend, Major Lanphier.

The Selfridge tests seemed to satisfy Lanphier and his associates, however, and during the period he was there, the model the technicians built obtained as high as 1,800 revolutions per minute and they announced its performance was entirely satisfactory. It was estimated these motors would run for 2,000 to 3,000 hours before the magnet center would have to be recharged.

A man named Dr. F.W. Hochstetter, of the Hochstetter Research Laboratories in Pittsburgh, hastily called a news conference and displayed models of what he said were the "Hendershot Motor". He demonstrated them, and when they would not work, he declared Hendershot was a fake, and that the motors worked only because of power derived from concealed pencil batteries.

After he had exhibited his models of the motor, Dr. Hochstetter announced that they would not generate enough electricity to... "light a 1 volt firefly" or to "stitch a fairy's britches."

Noting the lavish lecture room in a New York hotel which had been rented by (or for) Dr. Hochstetter for the press conference, Dr. Hochstetter was asked why he was SO interested in the Hendershot demonstrations and in trying to discredit them. He replied merely that he had "come to expose a fraud which would be capable of destroying faith in science for 1,000 years" and he claimed his only motive was that "pure science might shine forth untarnished."

It was obvious to those who were pro-Hendershot that, in view of all the fuss and bother of such a noted scientist as Dr. Hochstetter, somewhere behind it all, someone was anxious for the innovation to be ridiculed.

When approached with the accusations, my Father smiled and told reporters, "Dr. Hochstetter is correct, to a degree. I have concealed batteries in a model or two because I found that I could not trust some of my visitors, and I also had evidence that someone had tampered with my work. So I put a couple of batteries in on occasions to lead the intruders away from what I was working on."

He added that Major Lanphier and his army technicians were proof enough of his claims. "I didn't build the motor that was demonstrated at Detroit," he pointed out. "That was built by Army men under orders from Major Lanphier and under my direction. I didn't even so much as wind the motor. They built the motor and it works. That's my answer to all the critics - it works."

Dr. Hochstetter and his associates also claimed my Father had signed a contract and received \$25,000 for exploitation of the motor, but after a brief period of excitement, the matter was dropped - unproven.

Not long after his demonstrations of the motor, Dr. Hochstetter died under unusual circumstances. He was in a Baltimore and Ohio train wreck, and he was the only passenger on the whole train who lost his life!

My Father was the butt of many jokes and comments at the time of the debates about his invention. An artist, drawing for one of the Pittsburgh papers, depicted him in a cartoon riding a propellorless aeroplane. The caption made fun of him.

In later years my Father remarked, "Every time I see a jet plane go over now, I think of that cartoon and how everyone laughed at me for suggesting a plane could some day fly without a propeller. Twenty-five years ago I tried to tell them that."

As suddenly as it all started, the publicity and sensationalism of the Hendershot motor stopped. The last news story to appear was on March 10, 1928, when a small article appeared in most papers saying that Lester Hendershot was a patient in Emergency Hospital in Washington DC.

The personal account he gave was much the same as the newspaper quote, with the minor exception that he was hit by a bolt of 220 volts, not the jolting 2,000 the over-eager reporter had written. He was demonstrating the motor in the patent office, and the shock paralyzed his vocal chords, resulting in several weeks of recuperation before he completely recovered.

Something happened during this period that could explain the actions of Dr. Hochstetter and his associates. My Father said that while he was in the hospital, he was approached by a large corporation to stop his activity in connection with the motor or generator.

Until the day he died, he would not reveal the name of the company, only that if he were successful with his generator, it would be a serious threat to their multi-million dollar industry. He named the sum he accepted as \$25,000, and the condition was that he was not to build another unit for 20 years. That's when he dropped out of sight.

I have thought about the bizarre events connected with the generator, and feel it is possible the "large corporation first tried to stop the activities through Dr. Hochstetter. When this failed, they approached my Father personally and bought him off. It is interesting to note that one of the doctor's charges was that he was paid \$25,000 to exploit his work. Is it not odd that this is the same figure actually paid, but to STOP his activities, but was quoted BEFORE he was approached with the offer?

My Father admitted that he and the family lived in constant fear, as we were being contacted every so often by crackpots who had delved into the records and discovered his creation, and had gone to the trouble of searching him out. Some of them, he suspected, were representatives of subversive groups and/or foreign powers.

This latter charge seems a little exaggerated, but, was supported by a series of letters he received from a fellow in Ohio in 1952. He had traced my Father by going back to his hometown in Pennsylvania and talking to my uncle about the generator.

The first letter explained that he was a part of a group of scientists who were privately financing their own research on the same phenomena my Father discovered in 1928. He emphasized they would not allow backing by any organization or government since an invention such as the Hendershot Generator should be for "all the peoples and should not be controlled by national governments, but should be given gratis to the World Government when it is ready to assume World Responsibility." He was critical of my Father for allowing the military to look at it in 1928.

That letter was written in April 52, and in June a post card came with the following terse message, "Will shortly make public via radio and newspaper, connection your generator with 'Flying Saucer Propulsion'. Request Security Clearance from Security Chief you group within 48 hours. Have succeeded in duplication of your Generator."

In July 52 my Father received a four-page hand-written epistle from the Ohio man. To my knowledge, it was the last letter the writer sent on the subject. He discussed information his intelligence had received on flying saucers, modestly admitting his sources were better than the CIA or the FBI, which he claimed had investigated him several times. He intimated that the Pasadena scientist had recently been kidnapped because he was working on an attempt to adapt the generator to aircraft.

Then he went into a long and rambling dissertation on how he became interested in what he called the "Ether Vortex Phenomena" and the generator. He explained that the magnetic field in the earth and volcanic action are related, according to his studies. He had spent two and one half years in Japan working with Japanese volcanic scientists on the subject.

He mentioned one study he had made, and pointed out that the shift of the strata causing the volcanic eruption was due to a rotation of the ElectroMagnetic Field of the volcano at high speeds. He urged my Father to write a complete paper on his findings and publish them (preferably send them to the *Earthquake Research Institute* in Tokyo).

Referring to a particularly bad earthquake which had just occurred in the Los Angeles vicinity a few months before, the writer warned my Father not to operate his generator in the area near the San Andreas (seismic) Fault which runs through the area. He said, "You may not believe it, but YOU CAN CAUSE EARTHQUAKE ACTIVITY TO INCREASE if you continue to operate your generator in that district. I am wondering if you were not directly responsible for the recent earthquake near Los Angeles?"

Then he promised that he and his associates would keep the possibility of his involvement in the earthquake to themselves.

Letters such as these, plus occasional phone calls when the callers would not identify themselves, and a threat from an admitted Communist which was turned over to the FBI, caused my Father concern much of the time. If a large organization would take over the generator and its research, all he wanted out of it was enough money to take care of himself and his family in the future years.

One of the most encouraging offers came in September of 1956 when my Father received word that officials of the Mexican government wanted to meet with him and discuss the possibility of using his generator for the rural development program in Mexico.

Government officials flew to Los Angeles and drove out to our house, where our family doctor who spoke Spanish acted as interpreter. Arrangements were made for the family to go to Mexico City, and for my Father to work with Mexican technicians on the generator.

We all flew to Mexico City and were housed in an apartment near the home of the Director of Electricity. My Father supervised the Mexicans in building a model. He had been working with them for several weeks, becoming more and more tense as time passed. He confessed to my Mother that he was frightened because he understood no Spanish, and his fellow workers talked constantly in little groups by themselves, often glancing over at him. He could not understand a word they were saying, and it worried him considerably.

One morning in February of 1957, the laboratory called and asked where my Father was. My Mother told them he had left for work in the morning, and if he was not there, she had no idea where he might be. She became increasingly concerned as the day passed and there was no word from him.

That night he did not come home, and we were on the verge of hysteria by next morning, then we received a telegram from Los Angeles. My Father's fear had worked itself into a nervous frenzy and he had rushed to the airport the day before and taken a plane for California. To the day of his death, it was a closed subject and he would never explain why he was compelled to leave us so suddenly under such strange circumstances, except that he feared for his life.

The final attempt to promote the generator came in the latter part of 1960 when a Dr. Lloyd E. Cannon convinced my Father that he had the facilities to present the project to the United States Navy for research and development.

Cannon said he was the General Manager of his own company, *Force Research* of Los Angeles, Palm Springs in the Mojave Desert. Cannon explained that his group was made up of many dedicated scientists of various fields who contributed time and knowledge to *Force Research* projects. The range of experimentation covered electronics, astronautics, free energies, propulsion, and para psychology.

Under my Father's supervision, two models were built and 100 copies of a 56-page "proposal" were printed for presentation to the various government agencies and politicians who would have to review the project for its consideration.

After the completion of the proposal and it had been sent to the government with no results, Cannon travelled the south-western United States with the models trying to raise money for research. His visits were increasingly less frequent to our home until 1961, when a tragic climax to this story occurred.

On April 19, 1961, upon returning home from school, I found my Father dead. It was recorded as a suicide without any further investigation.

For those who might be interested in my Father's analysis of how his generator worked, the following are his theories on the subject.

"The field of magnetism surrounding the earth is similar to the field of magnetism in a man-made generator."

"The rotor of a generator is revolved by some means of power, cutting the lines of magnetism, creating electric power. The earth is turning inside of a field of magnetism. That, no one contradicts, yet it is claimed there is no power to be derived from it."

"Let's say we have a mechanism that will collect, polarize and create a positive and negative connection to this tremendous power that is ever-present on the earth."

"Take a survey compass. You can hold the needle east or west, and let go of it, and it immediately goes north and south. This same power, when cut by the proper apparatus as the earth rotates inside this magnetism, will produce power, the amount of which is not calculated at this time."

"As long as the earth rotates around the sun, it will create electric power which some scientists claim does not exist. Yet, we dig into the mountains for material that costs us unbelievable sums, to create the same power."

"This magnetism surrounding the earth is in the same relation to electric power as uranium is to atomic power. Earth's magnetism is ever-present at any height or depth. It is equal to uranium as a by-product for power, namely electricity."

"Magnetism must be cut. The lines of force circling the earth are constant and if this force is broken up, and polarized, you have the equivalent of uranium broken up, which creates a heat and in turn creates power."

"Breaking up the forces of magnetism, polarizing them, thereby creating a resistance for power, is the same principal as atomic energy."

"Scientists claim it requires friction to generate electricity. I claim the earth rotating as it does, according to scientific theory, creates friction as a generator. The ever-present magnetism is the field, or stator."

"We have only to utilize this source of power to light every home, highway, bridges, aeroplane or any type of thing that cannot now be lighted because of inadequacy of present facilities."

"A very small unit composed of wire, a magnet, several especially designed coils, condensers, collector units, and a few other minor items, will cut this force. Another especially designed mechanism will polarize it, giving a positive and a negative connection to any resistance and the result is the generation of electricity."

There you have the theory of how to create electricity from the magnetic force of the earth, written by a man with only a high school education.

As years went by I have always wanted to continue with my Father's invention, but have worried myself about possibly running into the same problems my Father did.

I would not do my Father justice just to stop all work on it and now I am ready to fulfil his dream. Since childhood I have been fascinated by electricity and have spent over 26 years in the electrical trade. Of his three son's, I alone have pursued this fascination and have applied my knowledge and experience to carry on my Father's work.

A lot of information has surfaced over the years, much of which is either backwards or just wrong according to my Father's notes kept stored away by the family. I am currently working on the Hendershot Generator and hope to have it working soon for a presentation at the *Colorado Springs Tesla Symposium.(1995)*.

Signed - Mark M. Hendershot