

An ersatz "Spirit of St. Louis," this Ryan B-1 Brougham was literally snatched from a junk pile to be rejuvenated and used in a motion picture made from Charles A. Lindbergh's book about the plane that took him nonstop from New York to Paris 40 years ago this month.

A larger, five-place version of the 'Spirit of St. Louis,'  
the Brougham was the luxury single-engine model of its day.  
Only two are known to exist, both in protective custody  
of aeronautical museums

■ ■ The Ryan *Brougham* of 1927-1932 was the offspring of an extremely famous father.

"Father" in this case was the "Spirit of St. Louis," which triggered the "Lindbergh Boom" in aviation when Charles A. Lindbergh flew nonstop from New York to Paris on May 20-21, 1927. The "Spirit"—actually, Ryan Model NYP, for New York-Paris—was developed from earlier Ryan mailplanes, the M-1 and M-2.

The NYP was designed and built in 60 days specifically for the transatlantic flight. It was originally conceived as a modification of the M-series, but when the detail requirements were worked out it became virtually a new design that was able to utilize a few M parts.

When commercial aviation boomed following Lindbergh's feat, Ryan adapted the NYP to a conventional five-place cabin model. The name, *Brougham*, was chosen for the B-1 model to identify a quality product for the carriage trade. This was essentially the NYP, cut back a bit toward M-1 size.

In the interest of the improved control characteristics required for a commercial airplane, the tail surfaces of the B-1 were enlarged over those of the NYP while the wing span was short-

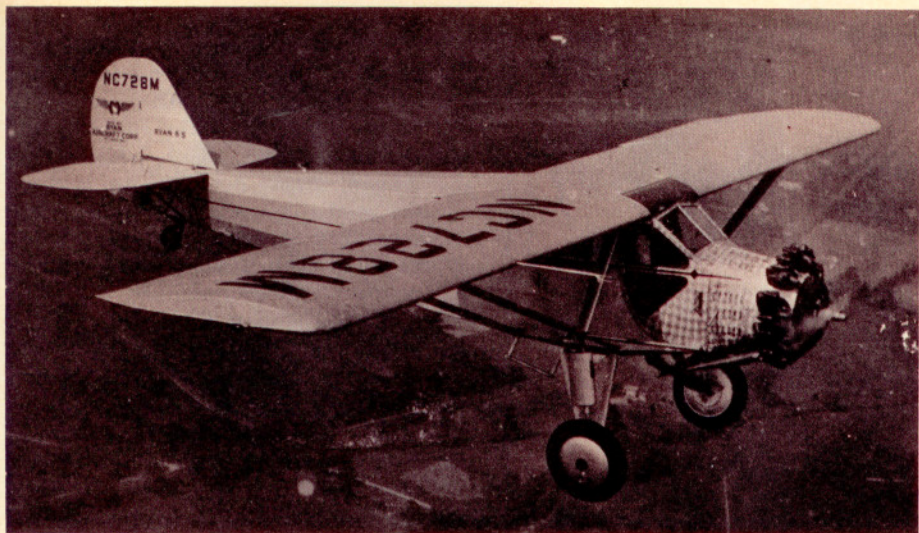
ened. The version powered with the 220 h.p. Wright J-5 Whirlwind engine of the NYP retained the distinctive spinner nose and burnished aluminum cowling. The spinner was deleted when later engines were adopted.

After the B-1, the *Brougham* design followed the standard practice—undergoing constant refinement and the inevitable increases in power, gross weight, dimensions, and price. The final model of the series was the six-place B-7, which was in production when Ryan succumbed to the depression in 1932.

*Broughams* were popular in their day and reached a production rate of 20 a month. At \$12,200 for the 220 h.p. B-1, they were a little out of the average private owner's reach but were used by business firms, advanced flying schools, charter operators, and even small scheduled airlines. Most of them had vanished from the scene by World War II, but a few hung on in bush-type operations.

In 1955, three of the surviving B-1's were rescued from oblivion by virtually being snatched off of junk piles. A movie was to be made of Lindbergh's second book, appropriately named "The Spirit of St. Louis," and several accurate reproductions of the airplane were required (one would have been too big





A later version of the Ryan Brougham was the B-5 model, equipped with a 300 h.p. Wright J-6-9 Whirlwind engine. The "fanlight" windshield was characteristic of all versions of the Brougham, which passed through seven model modifications from 1927 to 1929. PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

## YESTERDAY'S WINGS

# THE RYAN BROUGHAM

by PETER M. BOWERS / AOPA 54408

a risk for such a high-budget picture). The easiest way to get them was to reverse evolution again and convert Ryan B-1's into NYP's.

One of the three was reworked by Jimmy Stewart—star of the picture and a pilot in his own right—and his associates. The other two were converted by Paul Mantz Air Services, chief supplier of airplanes for the movie industry.

None of these conversions went so far as to put the pilot in Lindbergh's blind spot under the trailing edge of the wing. Standard controls and instrument panels were retained and side windows were used only on the side away from the camera plane. On the camera side, solid NYP-type nose panels were fitted in place to give authentic appearance. Two of these synthetic "Spirits" have found permanent homes. Jimmy Stewart's is in the Ford Museum in Dearborn, Mich., and one of the Mantz NYP's is owned by the Missouri Historical Association.

The Ryan firm itself has had a varied corporate career. It began as Ryan Airlines in 1922 with a short-haul route from San Diego, its home base, to Los Angeles. Activity expanded to include a small factory and a flying school. T. Claude Ryan, the founder, sold the firm to B. F. Mahoney shortly before

the NYP was built, and it became the B. F. Mahoney Aircraft Corporation.

Reorganized and refinanced for large-scale production after Lindbergh's flight, it became the Mahoney-Ryan Aircraft Corporation, even though Ryan was no longer connected with it. Late in 1928, Mahoney sold his interests to the St. Louis businessmen who had backed Lindbergh, and the plant was moved to St. Louis.

In May 1929 a merger resulted in Mahoney-Ryan becoming a division of the giant Detroit Aircraft Corporation and some production was transferred to Detroit. When Detroit Aircraft collapsed during the depression, Mahoney-Ryan fell with it. □

### RYAN BROUGHAM SPECIFICATIONS

Model	B-1 (1927)	B-7 (1929)
Span	42 ft.	42 ft. 4 in.
Length	27 ft. 9 in.	29 ft. 11 in.
Wing Area	270 sq. ft.	280 sq. ft.
Power plant	Wright J-5 220 h.p.	P & W "Wasp" 420 h.p.
Empty Weight	1,870 lbs.	2,503 lbs.
Gross Weight	3,300 lbs.	4,283 lbs.
Top Speed	125 m.p.h.	150 m.p.h.
Range	700 mi.	500 mi.
Cost	\$12,200	\$19,000