

When the Great Depression descended over the nation, the Valley Flying Service folded and Six spent the next several years traveling in China, France, and Spain. When he got back from Europe, he obtained a job as district circulation manager for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. But the pull of aviation was strong, and after two years on the newspaper, Six joined with Money Mouton to form Mouton & Six, the first Beechcraft distributor for Northern California, Oregon and Washington. Six was doing fairly well in his new business when, in 1936, he met Tommy Fortune Ryan III, who had just bought Hanford Airlines (later Mid-Continent and now a part of Braniff), following cancellation of the airmail contracts. Ryan informed Six of an opportunity to buy into the Southwest Division of Varney Speed Lines, which needed money to handle its newly-won Pueblo-El Paso route, and then introduced Six to Louis Mueller (Chairman of the Board of Continental until February 28th, 1966). Mueller had helped found the Southwest Division of Varney in 1934 with Walter T. Varney. As an upshot of all this, Six bought into the line with \$90,000 and became general manager on July 5th, 1936.

Varney was operating one round-trip per day over the route with three single-engine Lockheed Vegas, at a mail rate of 17 cents per mile. Six's first job was to go to Washington and get the airmail division of the Interstate Commerce Commission to raise the rate to the maximum of 33-1/3 cents per mile allowed by law. Together with Mueller, Six talked Lockheed into selling the little line three twin-engine \$39,500 Lodestars for a down payment of only \$5,000 each. Six and Mueller put up their homes and other personal property to secure the loan. The two men knew the line had to get into Denver and made a deal with W.A. Patterson, President of United Airlines, to jointly buy the route of Wyoming Air Services for \$50,000. United took the Cheyenne-to-Denver portion, and Varney, the Denver-Pueblo section. A few days later, in October of 1937, Six moved all 16 employees to Denver, where the headquarters remained until July 15th, 1963, when they moved to Los Angeles. Shortly after moving to Denver, the airline changed its name to Continental Airlines, Inc., and on February 3rd, 1938, Six was named president.

When a Federal Court threw out all airline bids for the last airmail route in the country (Wichita-Pueblo) in 1938, Six filed an official application for the run with the Civil Aeronautics Board. The application was the first ever filed with the Board. The new CAB Chairman, Ed Nobel, acknowledged it on stationery of his former firm, the Life Saver Corporation. Six spent part of World War II in the Army Air Transport Command as a lieutenant colonel and the remainder as a reserve officer in charge of Continental Airlines' bomber modification center in Denver. In 1944, Six returned to Continental and began the company's post-war expansion by winning a series of routes from the CAB which let Continental spread through Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

In 1967, Six won for his airline a five-year contract to supply air service to, from, and within the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The service linked Hawaii, Johnston Island, Kwajalein, Majuro, Ponape, Truk, Guam, Yap, Palau, Rota, Saipan and Okinawa. This authority became permanent when on August 11th, 1971, the Civil Aeronautics Board awarded Continental/Air Micronesia rights between Hawaii, Guam and Micronesia, plus a route from American Samoa through the Gilbert and Ellice Islands and the Trust Territory and Guam to Okinawa. Also in 1967, the Civil Aeronautics Board authorized Continental to link the Gulf states of Louisiana and Texas with Washington and Oregon in the Pacific Northwest, bringing three new key destinations into the airline's route structure New Orleans, Seattle, and