

LINDY'S ENGINEER DIES FORGOTTEN

Hall Delivered — Fame Didn't

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The fleeting finger of fame touched his life briefly and then moved on, and when he died in his home here a world which had sung his praises scarcely knew he had gone.

His name was Donald A. Hall, and he was a young man of 28 when Charles Lindbergh walked into the meager plant of Ryan Airlines, Inc., on Feb. 24, 1927.

Lindbergh, an airmail pilot who thought he could fly across the Atlantic in a modified Ryan M-2 single-engine plane, had come to San Diego to see if the small firm could deliver the plane he needed.

During the two months that followed Lindbergh's arrival, Hall, who had joined the firm only three weeks earlier as its chief engineer, and numerous other San Diegans built a plane that was to carry them

briefly into the spotlight of the world on the wings of the Lone Eagle.

But spotlights have a way of growing dim, and it soon began to fade.

Lindbergh went on to become a legend. And Don Hall and many others soon felt the sting and the sometimes bitter aftertaste of fame.

Hall lived a full life in the post-Lindbergh years, but nothing was ever quite the

same for him again. He settled into a routine life, a good engineer, an extremely likable, unassuming man, but not the sort of man you would expect to shake the world.

He suffered a heart attack and died here May 2 at the age of 69. His widow, for reasons of her own, shared the news with only a few close friends, and until today only a handful of people knew he had died.

A friend of the family notified Lindbergh, who wrote a long, personal letter to Mrs. Hall. Lindbergh himself often gave credit to Hall as a key member of the team that enabled him to do something no other man had done before.

It was an unusual set of circumstances that led Lindbergh to San Diego that eventful year. The race to become the first man to fly
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