

Historical Article

ENGLISH AIR MEN COMING MESA JOURNAL AUGUST 1, 1941

British Isles' Fighting Bird Will be Symbol of Field - Fliers To Be Training Here Within A Few Weeks

It will be a Falcon Field - Southwest Airways training base seven miles northeast of Mesa.

And by coincidence the reward for naming the field will be the first for E. B. Tucker, Mesa City Engineer, for the many uncounted hours of time and overtime which he devoted to find sites for the two big training fields in the local district.

Tucker's suggestion met with the wholehearted approval of Southwest Airways officials. "His explanation that Falcon is symbolic of the famous English fighting spirit and is the name of their renowned fighting and hunting bird seems very appropriate," John H Connelly, vice-president, said. Tucker will receive an air tour of the valley for himself and a companion as a prize for suggesting the name most appropriate.

The falcon, a hawk trained for hunting in the British Isles, will be the insignia used as Falcon Field.

The name was chosen from among 70 submitted by many who entered into the contest conducted by the Mesa Chamber of Commerce. Several suggested such names as "Superstition Field" "Saguaro Field" "Sun Valley" and others.

Aptly named because British airmen will be trained at the field for 20 weeks before returning across the Atlantic to enter into combat with the United Kingdom's forces, Falcon Field is expected to be in operation in little more than a month. A number of British fliers are already in training at Thunderbird Field, also operated by Southwest Airways, north of Glendale, and will be transferred here as soon as the training base is ready.

Work is advancing on barracks, a large building housing kitchen, mess hall, recreation hall, hospital and other quarters, hangars and other facilities.

Tucker had an important part in locating sites for the two training fields here, cooperating with the chamber of commerce to furnish maps and much data which was required before the sites were approved. He not only was available during office hours at the city hall but often worked after hours and on Sunday and used his own car to help the Chamber of Commerce furnish government officials with information concerning locations. William Menhennet, Chamber of Commerce secretary, said.