Introduction

As the crow flies (they measure distance that-a-way in Indiana), the country towns of Brookston and Kentland lie thirty-six miles apart. Between them the crows out there flap over level fields of corn, oats, soybeans, wheat, and hay.

With Purdue University off to the south, Brookston and Kentland have formed a triangle for more than a century. As the crows fly, Purdue is fourteen miles from Brookston, thirty-seven miles southeast of Kentland.

In the space of fifty-eight years, a remarkable thing took place in that triangle. Two boys from farms near Brookston and Kentland attended Purdue. One turned dreamer and became a writer. The other mastered drawing and invented machines. After graduations six years apart, both men earned names and fortunes.

Distant strangers as Purdue alumni, they met at last in 1922, in a county judge’s office. That afternoon they got dust on their good leather shoes by hiking shallow hills and weeds on an old farm. They stood on a stretch of high ground and shared a vision that day, made a deal, shook hands, bought the farm, and on it started a football stadium still booming at Purdue.

The strangers were Dave Ross and George Ade. Because they met, the rest is history.

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