NEWS & COMMENT
FROM OUR MEMBERS

VOL. 27, NO. 2, SUMMER 1982
U.S. NAVAL SQUADRON INSIGNIA

Donald H. White. Berkeley. CA

I would like to commend the AAHS and their printing processors on the superb job done in reproducing my series of paintings of naval aircraft insignia.

Credits are in order, which I'd like to mention at this time, and are as follows:

Much credit to William Larkins, of course, via his book *U.S. Navy Aircraft 1921-1941* from which most data was acquired. Any errors noted in work were due to my own careless study of his work, rather than his.

I didn't submit my 8x10 originals to AAHS, but sent photographic copies. This excellent job of photography was done by Richard P. Hunnicutt, for which much credit must be given for their quality.

UNMANNED BALLOON FLIGHT

WILLIAMSBURG—When researching historic events concerning manned flights in Virginia, John W. Priddy III uncovered some interesting information about early experiments with unmanned balloons.

In an old issue of the *Virginia Historical Magazine.* Priddy found an article that reprinted letters from J. S. Watson, a student at the college of William and Mary, to his brother, David, in Louisa County.

"As far as I can tell, his letter relates an account of the first successful attempt at flying a hot air balloon in Virginia," Priddy said.

In a letter dated May 7, 1801, Watson wrote:

"I mentioned to you in my last letter that I was then engaged in the construction of a balloon. Since that time the spirit for balloons has been in a rage amongst us."

In a footnote the magazine stated: "This seems to have been the first time one had been seen in Williamsburg."

Watson's letter continued: "We constructed one of a globular form six feet in diameter. We attempted to raise it from the Court House Green.

"The wind blowing rather fresh at the time, we thought to take advantage of it by going near the walls of the C. House where the current was somewhat broken."

Their first attempt, using spirits of turpentine to fuel the flames that heated the air inside the balloon failed.

"It rose, but unluckily . . . an eddy drew our balloon against the eaves of the [court]house. It tilted, took fire, and our hopes were blasted. This, which happened in the presence of a pretty numerous concourse, was a little mortifying to young philosophers."

With the aid of some other students, Watson constructed a second balloon, eight feet in diameter.

"And a second time we failed not so much, I must confess from accident, as from our own imprudence," Watson wrote his brother.

"Our credit, and we even thought the credit of the college was now at stake. One must be raised."

The third balloon, more than 13 feet in diameter, was constructed.

It was ornamented with 16 blue stars.

"We again paraded to the green," Watson said.

"The evening was pleasant and a numerous concourse was assembled. And indifferent spectators would have laughed at the trembling caution with which we now proceeded.

"This time we used spirits of wine which gives a greater heat with less flame when sufficiently heated and expanded we let it loose.

"It rose gently into the air. and a general shout rose with it. I never saw so great and so universal delight as it gave to the spectators."

Watson concluded his letter with the timeless plea of all college students: "I shall write for money in mv next."

DH-4B, Boiling Field, D.C., 17 July 1925.
(USAF via William H. Greenhalgh)

COLLISION AT BOLLING

Lt. Col. William hi. Greenhalgh. USAF (Ret.). Wetumpka. AL

Reference is made to Bob Cavanagh's letter on page 77 of AAHS *Journal* Volume 27, No. 1, Spring 1982, and to the accompanying photographs. The one at the lower left, a copy of which I will enclose, has a background story that is a bit unusual.

On the night of 16 July 1925, two Army-Air Service crews from Boiling Field with their DH-4B aircraft were at Brown Field, Quantico, VA, about 30 minutes' flying time from their home base. Capt. Eaker departed in his DH-4 at about 2010, taking off to the south against a wind that he estimated to be 15 to 20 miles per hour. The skies were clear and he made an uneventful landing on the grass surface at Boiling Field. The only lighting at the field came from three floodlights atop the operations building that illuminated the parking ramp and a small slice of the landing area.

As Lt. Donald G. Duke and his passenger, Lt. George E. Hodge, walked toward their DH-4 at Brown Field, a Marine Corps major stopped Lt. Hodge, told him that he would be about five minutes behind them, and asked that the Boiling Field lights be left on until he landed. Taking off from Brown Field about 10 minutes behind Capt. Eaker, Lt. Duke flew directly to Boiling Field and landed to the south. As he taxiied up next to Capt. Eaker's DH-4 in the lighted parking area, the waiting crew chief signaled that he wanted the engine left running. The two lieutenants dismounted, watched the mechanic climb into the front cockpit preparatory to moving the aircraft to the hangar, and turned to walk toward the operations office.

The Marine Corps pilot had never landed at Boiling Field, but he found it, circled a couple of times to get his bearings, and headed for a downwind landing. His Vought VE-9 aircraft was a bit fast as he felt for the unfamiliar surface, touched, and rolled. Twenty yards from touchdown there was a crash as his right wings smashed into the DH-4B that Lts. Duke and Hodge had just vacated. He never saw the parked aircraft because of the floodlight glare, and those on the ground never heard the idled engine on the landing Vought because of the running Liberty engine in the DH-4.

The crew chief snapped off the ignition switch as the DH-4B swung 90 degrees from the force of the blow, its fuselage aft of the rear cockpit a mass of twisted wreckage. Partway through the swing the wreckage struck Lt. Hodge and knocked him to the ground. Fortunately, he suffered only minor scrapes and cuts, but his dignity certainly must have been deeply injured.

ISLAND WAR RELICS

Shelby York, Placentia, CA

Having just returned from the Central Pacific, I thought the readers would enjoy a report on the WWII aircraft status at some of the islands there. Our combination three-week vacation/business trip took us through the Marshall, Marianas and Caroline groups, which included stops at Johnston Island, Majuro, Kwajalein, Ponopa and Truk Lagoon. Of the relics still visible mainly at Truk there were sunken ships and field pieces. No aircraft were found.

Guam produced a non-flying C-46 at the cargo terminal. Upon interviewing Chuck McManus, the Guam aviation historical expert, we learned that the *Commando* was being bought by a group of aviation enthusiasts for a static display. All other WWII aircraft remnants had been picked over long ago. A Japanese A6M Zero is in an underground hangar totally intact somewhere beneath the naval air station taxiways. Seventeen years ago the steel and concrete hangar was discovered during excavation for enlarging the field capacity. The navy bulldozed dirt over the entrance to the hangar and no one has been able to find it since. Sometime in the future when the aircraft becomes worth a million dollars, the navy may show interest enough to locate it and dig it up.

Saipan had a few pieces of aircraft such as engines, props, and landing gears. If any air-

frames exist they long since have been engulfed by the Tangan-Tangan planted after the war. We scoured the base area at Isely Field (now Saipan International) and found absolutely nothing.

Tinian Island is almost totally overgrown at North Field. The main two runways could still be used today. They are in excellent condition. The atomic bomb loading pits have been filled and landscaped. They are maintained by the locals. Other remains, such as an inter-island freighter close to the harbor and numerous antiaircraft guns can be seen at the airport and San Jose Village.

We journeyed to Palau for a week. We found a Zero in one of the lagoons. It was only partially intact, but in good condition considering the 38 years in the water. The old Japanese seaplane launch ramps could still be used today, but no aircraft were evident.

We spent a day at Peleliu, 25 miles to the south and discovered an aircraft boneyard in the center of the island. I recognized pieces of TBMs, SBDs, *Helldivers* and *Corsairs* in that pile of aluminum. It appeared bulldozers had come from all points of the compass to sandwich in the wrecks. We were informed that if time permitted other partial wrecks were in the jungle around the airfield and could be found with a machete-armed local guide. The island is still well stocked with field pieces, amtracs, mortars and tanks from both sides. The interior of the island appears untouched since 1945. Maybe in the future, time can be found to explore the island properly. Until then the stuff still does exist in the islands.

Intact *Corsair* canopy at Peleliu's aircraft boneyard.

Peleliu's former Japanese airstrip is now used by Aero Belau. The Cessna 207 makes biweekly trips to the island.

P&W 1830 engine on Saipan's International Hotel grounds.

N-B, ROBERTSON STANDARDS, ETC.

Don Ives, Bridgeport, CT

In Jack Kennedy's fine account of Nicholas-Beazley in Vol. 27, No. 1, of the *Journal* mention is often made of pilot Joe Hammer. The May 21, 1928, *Aviation* stated he was to fly the Anheuser-Busch, Inc., Ryan Brougham exec ship out of Lambert Field, St. Louis. The June 11, 1928, *Aviation* had him returning with the sales manager after a 4,800-mile tour to Laredo and back. An *Aero Digest* item of Sept. 1930 listed him as an Interstate Airways (Div. of American Airways) regular out of Chicago to Atlanta.

During the '30s we were fortunate enough to be able to listen in often on the shortwave communications of American, United and TWA, though mostly AA because there was more variety and their ships flew over our home. The Newark-Boston, Boston-Cleveland with its connector from Newark at Albany, Newark-St. Hubert (Montreal) and Newark-Buffalo-Detroit-Chicago routes were on the same frequencies (Northern). It was very intriguing to hear how airlines operated. Our records show that Joe Hammer flew C-W T-32 Condors, DC-2s and DC-3s on the Chicago-Newark route so we heard he or his copilot give their positions every half hour, along with the many other crews.

The Sept. 18, 1935, issue of the *N.Y. Herald Tribune* had an item dated the previous day concerning a tipsy Brooklyn Dodger outfielder, Leonard Koenecke, who wanted to fight in an AA Chicago-Newark DC-2 bound for Detroit. After he knocked the stewardess down the 6-foot, 2-inch, 200-lb. copilot forced him into his seat by the shoulders. This time, after his two teammates had unsuccessfully tried to quiet him, Joe came out, forced him into his seat and told him if he did not behave like a gentleman he would be put off at Detroit and had the copilot stand over him until the ship reached Detroit. The plane crew's homes were given as Chicago.

The picture caption on page 41 incorrectly identifies the JN-4D shown as a Standard.

The picture caption on page 45 states that the clipped-wing Standard was built only by N-B at Marshall. Not only was Robertson directly competing with N-B but Nebraska had produced clipped-wing Lincoln Standards as early as 1920 as the enclosed copies from *Aerial Age Weekly* and *Aviation* verify. We don't know if Robertson shortened their fuselages. Lincoln did not. The Gates Flying Circus ships didn't have short fuselages. Unfortunately the maker of the ship with the short fuselage in the enclosed photo at Hartford is unknown. As Nebraska had bought the plans, machinery and tooling for the SJ-1 from Standard after Mitsui withdrew its support, some of the Lincoln Standards could have been new ships. The photo of the Hisso Standard J-1 at Roosevelt Field #2 was submitted because the control and bracing cables on the wings are clearly shown.

As there were 23 Standard Js made from 1916 until the U.S. entered the war, plus the wartime 750 Standard, 400 each Dayton-Wright and Fisher Body, and 51 by Wright-Martin, the total number of original J/SJ-1s

Hisso Standard J-1 with center section gas tank. Control and bracing cables show clearly. There were many varieties of J-1s due to so many types of equipment and accessories available for them, not to mention each individual modifying his/her ship to their preferences or available funds. 101-H was at Roosevelt Field No. 2 (west side), Mineola. on June 25, 1930. (Photo by DM. Ives)

Clipped-wing Standard with OX-5 or OXX-6 and nose radiator. Note that fuselage deck drops more abruptly than N-B types, just in front of the fin. This could possibly have been a Robertson, but with so many variations of Standards, who knows?

1416 was at Brainard Field, Hartford, CT, in late July 1928. Its companion was a Waco 10 (C-1796) with fuselage mounted tail navigation light. Nos. on sides of fuselages were Connecticut registrations. Notice the "C" was not painted on the wing number of the Waco but appears on the rudder. (Photo by D.M. Ives)

should be 1624. The earlier planes had 90-hp A-7s with most of the later ones using 100-hp A-7As, a picture on page 277 of *Modern Aircraft,* 1928, showing the former in a J.

Standard references which may be of interest include:

Aviation, Mar. 24, 1924, page 313 and April 14, 1924, page 401; *U.S. Army Aircraft, 1908-1946,* Fahey, pages 6, 9, 10; *Aircraft Mechanics Handbook,* Colvin, 1918, pages 256-270; *Aircraft Year Book. 1919.* pages 188-217.

Last, but not least, the Barling XNBL-1, with some items to draw some hee-haws from *Aviation,* Oct. 15, 1923, page 489. Piloted by a future president of Northwest Orient Airlines it had just made a short landing but turned while taxiing with a messenger alongside piloted by a future chief of operations of the Aviation Corp. of Delaware's Colonial Airways, standing the latter on its nose, breaking the prop without injury to the pilot.

The other item was as the Casey Jones was approaching Wilbur Wright Field with *Aviation's* editor in an Oriole, a peculiar obstruction was observed in the middle of the field which appeared to be a hangar under construction. As the Oriole passed over it at a hundred feet or so it was recognized as the triplane surrounded by scaffolding swarming with men. It was later learned they were putting new fabric *over the old as* it had to be rushed to the National Air Races at St. Louis!

DOMINICAN C-121A CONSTELLATION

Norbert Oertel, Hamburg, West Germany

As a longtime Constellation fan I read the article on the "C-121A in USAF and Civil Service" (Spring 1980 *Journal)* with much pleasure. I was especially interested in the detailed history of c/n 2607, as I got the opportunity in June 1980 to stay on board this particular Constellation on a freight run from San Juan, P.R., to Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic.

The aircraft belonged to Aerolineas Argo S.A., a Dominican freight carrier and makes regular visits to San Juan—where I took the enclosed picture—and can occasionally be seen at Miami as well.

The former serial number 0-80615 could still be seen on the tail, although overpainted.

I do have one more comment, this time concerning c/n 2608, which went to Ethiopian Airlines in 1957 and subsequently crashed.

I doubt that this aircraft was delivered to and flown by Ethiopian in original short-nose (non-radar) configuration, as shown on page 18, as I do have photos showing this aircraft already fitted with long radar nose and in service with Ethiopian, and I also believe that by 1957 there was no short-nose C-121A left. Could this photo be an artist's impression?

FORUM OF FLIGHT—VOLUME 26, NO. 4

Ed Leiser, Chula Vista, CA

In the Forum of Flight, AAHS *Journal,* Winter 1981, page 332, there appeared a striped Waco CTO with date, place and data unknown. The same photo appeared in the *Aircraft Yearbook for 1930,* page 235. The owner was listed as James B. Hall, a New York broker. No other info was listed.

I was unable to find the license number in the January 1929 listing of licensed aircraft in the U.S. I suppose it was licensed after that date.

An *excellent Journal.* I particularly enjoyed Olmsted's article on wing collecting, which will be helpful at the museum here in San Diego.

LIGHT PLANES FOR C.O.I.N.

Gary Fisk, Lawndale, CA

While thumbing through the back issues of AAHS *Journal,* I came across the picture essay, "Light Plane Proposals for a Warplane Role," in the Fall 1977 issue. It refers to attempts by light plane manufacturers in the early '50s attempting to interest the military in off-the-shelf light aircraft for use as

C-121A (0-80615) at San Juan, June 1980.

(Photo by Norbert Oertel)

C.O.I.N. fighters. Well, I guess they went through a similar evaluation of civilian light planes in the 1965-1966 time period. Article in *Flight* and *Aviation Week* at the time told of Piper, Beech and Cessna aircraft being evaluated for the C.O.I.N. role outfitted with 250-lb. napalm tanks, 5-in. Zuni rockets, 2.75-in. folding fin unguided rockets, 7.62mm six-barrel machine gun pods and SUU/14A bomblet dispensers. Contenders included a Beech *Bonanza,* Piper *Cherokee* and Cessna 206 *Super Skywagon.* It seems really strange to see docile and benign airplanes outfitted with fangs.

XP-77

Mike Kusenda, Cleveland Heights, OH

The material published in the Winter 1981 issue on the XP-77 was very interesting to me, particularly since a couple of the photo captions tantalizingly suggested that the plane looked like a racer evolution of the late '30s. Whether the caption writer was aware of it or not the truth is the XP-77 was a direct descendant of Harry Crosby's CR-3, CR-4 and his proposed CR-5 racing planes.

While doing research on race plane designer and pilot Harry Crosby for a future *Journal* article, I was fortunate to contact the former Mrs. Crosby (Harry Crosby was killed testing the Northrop XP-79-B Sept. 12, 1945). In a letter to me, Mrs. Crosby described the redesign of the CR-5 into a lightweight fighter design. Although she was not too clear on the details, after some 40 years, she went on to state that the project was "taken away" from Crosby by the Army Air Force and assigned to Bell Aircraft Corp. and emerged from their plant as the XP-77.

In 1936 Harry Crosby became disenchanted with the shortcomings of the 6-cylinder Menasco C6-S4 engine after his short experience with the powerplant in his CR-3 racer. He designed the CR-4 in 1937 around the V-12 SV-770 engine, but unfortunately was unable to obtain the engine, after an earlier encouragement by Ranger. To pay his and his backers' debts, Crosby reluctantly reverted to the Menasco C6-S4 for the 1938 and 1939 National Air Races.

In general appearance the CR-4 resembled the XP-77 except for the larger 27 ft. 6 in. wingspan and tricycle gear of the latter.

The CR-5 design started out as an improved CR-4; however, air racing ended with the 1939 N.A.R. event. To salvage the design and engineering efforts, Crosby converted the concept into a lightweight fighter design.

I am at present trying to trace down whatever communications existed between Harry Crosby and the Army Air Force in regard to his lightweight fighter design and further details of the assignment of the project to Bell Aircraft Corp. Any information contributed by Society members will be greatly appreciated.

LIBERATOR INFO—FORUM OF FLIGHT

Bill Slate, Warren, MI

A photo of Continental Can Company's Consolidated LB-30 by Warren D. Shipp appeared in the AAHS *Journal,* Forum of Flight, Vol. 26, No. 4, Winter '81 issue. In the caption, Mr. Shipp requested historical details on the aircraft. The above photo is of the same aircraft which is currently flying as N12905 with the Confederate Air Force and it now has a "D" nose.

LB-30 XC-CAY **(Steve Hudek Collection)**

It was originally built as c/n 18 *Liberator* MK I for Britain as RAF AM927, but due to a ferry accident it was returned to the factory and converted to a C-87 for the USAAF. This photo and info surfaced with my RP for Civil/WWII bomber and fighter types.

If Mr. Shipp or other AAHS members have photos to lend for my RP, my address is: W.B. Slate, 23847 Virginia, Warren, MI 48091.

EAST/WEST AND TIN GOOSE

Edward Welsh, Longboat Key, FL

I believe you will find Port Clinton, Ohio, and the *Tin Goose* in northwestern Ohio, not northeastern. (See "Tin Goose Is Back," page 9, Newsletter No. 60, 4th Quarter, 1981.)

In the mid-1950s I had occasion to visit Sandusky, Ohio, where Ralph Dietrick was operating the *Tin Goose* out to Kelley's Island and the Bass Islands. As I recall he also had a *Condor* and hauled everything from hay to beer and mail as well as occasional passengers. I made three flights with him and often flew into those islands in my Bonanza "G". The soil is only about an inch deep on solid rock but has wild grass and hundreds of pheasants thrived on the landing strip. My last flight over the islands was piloting Jerrie Mock's Cessna 180 (NC1538-C) over the islands for photographers who later captioned the pictures in Gulf Oil Co. advertisements, "Jerrie Mock flying over Pacific Islands." She was too tired to make that flight. 38-Charlie is now in the Smithsonian Institution.

LOCKHEED 10A—B-17G—HELP!

Don Dawson, Ketchikan, AK

With regards to two in-depth research projects I've been working on, I am seeking copies of photos of the following two aircraft:

Lockheed Mod. 10A/10B Electra NC-14915 while in service with Northwest Airlines (1935-1938), Boston and Maine Airways (1938-1940) and National Airlines (1940-1942).

B-17G USAAF A/C No. 42-97371 **"HAIRLESS JOE,"** 8th USAAF 452nd Bomb Group, 728th Bomb Squadron, stationed in WWII at Deopham Green (Sta. 142), U.K. This aircraft was shot down by Luftwaffe fighters over the Frankfurt area of Germany while en route to Brux, Czechoslovakia, during the mission of May 12, 1944, with all hands bailing out safely, though into capture. Also need a/c code letters or tail ID letter.

Any readers having photos of either of these aircraft are requested to contact: Don Dawson, P.O. Box 6955, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901.

SIKORSKY S-41

Ralph P. Anderson, Bensenville, IL

I am writing in regard to the picture of a Sikorsky S-41 appearing in your Fall '81 *Journal,* page 245.

This identical picture is shown in an article on Pan-American's fleet in the British magazine, *Air Pictorial,* for Sept. 1967, page 318. It is captioned, "A slightly larger development of the S-38, it was used on the Boston-Halifax route in 1931."

In the article it is mentioned as the "S-41 which entered service in 1931 and was used on the Boston-Halifax route, was a comparatively simple refinement of the S-38, slightly larger all around, and able to carry 11 passengers." The location of the picture is not specified.

PAA also had some twin-tailed S-43s.

TRAGEDY DOWNS RETIRED FIGHTER-PILOT ACE

Fitz McAden, Knight News Service

May 27, 1953: Pete Fernandez, patriot, hotshot pilot, ace, is summoned to the White House by the president of the United States of America. Ike, grinning, acclaims him a hero.

Oct. 17, 1980: Pete Fernandez, broke, disillusioned, cracks up a plane off a lonely road on Grand Bahama Island, dying in flames. His marijuana cargo goes up in smoke.

His friends couldn't believe it. How could straight-arrow Pete, loyal American, devoted family man, have anything to do with drugs? Inconceivable.

At the First Baptist Church of Perrine, FL, the pastor prayed for the warrior of old and gave money to his widow. At the Old Cutler Inn, the barkeep sold $10 tickets for "Pete's Benefit Barbecue."

"He was a Korean War ace. He shot down communist planes. He was not a marijuana runner," said Lee Bass, friend.

"My father was down on dope," said his daughter, Laurie, 22. She knew. When she was 15, she took up pot, Quaaludes and Secanol, and it crushed her daddy. She had to go to a drug rehabilitation center.

The transportation of Manuel J. Fernandez, Jr.—onetime exuberant flyboy and model citizen—to an embittered, abruptly aged, for-hire pilot, is a disturbing chronicle.

Pete, as everyone knew him, was a Conch, a Key West native. He was born April 19, 1925. The family moved to Miami when he was six. Flying was his heritage. His father was an officer in the Army Air Corps. Pete grew up making model airplanes and peddling newspapers to pay for flying lessons.

A couple of days after his 1943 graduation from high school, Pete enlisted as an aviation cadet. In 1948, he piloted a C-47 in the Cold War's first crisis, the Berlin Airlift. Great Britain singled out Pete and made him an honorary member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Pete could fly anything—and gun down anything. "He could shoot climbing straight up, flat on his back," said Gus Fernandez, a onetime Air Force navigator. At bases in Arizona and California, Pete taught flying and gunnery in an F-86 Sabrejet.

Then came Korea. On Feb. 18, 1953. Lt. Manuel J. Fernandez, Jr., flying as "John Dog 1," became an ace with his fifth kill. He led a squadron of F-86s into a dog fight just south of the Yalu River.

"I looked to the left and saw 32 MiGs," he said. "We turned into them. I closed within 200 feet of the last two and opened fire on the nearest one. I saw fire, smoke, and pieces of a plane roll back.

"I had to barrel roll to avoid the debris. I saw the pilot fumble in the cockpit."

Again and again, his ground crew painted little red stars just below the plexiglass canopy of his cockpit, right above the squadron insignia of a red rooster with boxing gloves.

In all, Pete killed 14 times. In a profession whose mission was death, Capt. Manuel J. Fernandez, Jr., became a celebrity.

At the White House, Pete "briefed" Dwight D. Eisenhower. At a luncheon he told Sam Rayburn what he knew about the enemy.

Miami worshiped its hero, parading him down Biscayne Boulevard with Leathernecks from the Marine base at Opa-locka. The mayor gave him the key to the city. A beauty queen kissed him. He was ensconced in the San Souci, Miami Beach's finest hotel.

On Nov. 21, 1953, Pete married Jean Marie Eberman, a National Airlines stewardess. At his side stood Capt. Joseph McConnell, the Korean War's No. 1 ace with 16 MiG kills. Pete had taught him how to shoot.

Some people say Pete would have been America's top ace had not the Air Force grounded him. His wife offered one explanation: "It came over the North Korean radio that they wanted to shoot him down specifically—so they wouldn't let him fly." Flying buddies offer another explanation: Pete's superiors resented his Latin surname somewhat and his attitude. "If the sign said not to smoke, Pete would light up," his navigator friend recalled.

Pete lived well in the years after Korea. Assignments took him from East Coast to West Coast and back to Miami. He lived in a comfortable house on Key Biscayne and drove a Cadillac convertible, then a Mercedes-Benz ordered specially from Germany.

"Nothing but the best," said his wife.

Disenchantment with the Air Force came slowly, promotion hardly at all. The ace moved up only one rank in 10 years. Maj. Fernandez put in his last assignment in Buenos Aires teaching Argentinians how to fly Sabrejets.

After 20 years, he resigned in 1963. At 38, Pete found himself too old to fly for big commercial airlines. Airlines hired younger men.

But Pete couldn't quit flying. He began years of piloting for one small airline after another; beef cattle to Mexico City, household appliances to Caracas, Christmas trees to Aruba. Often he flew out of "Corrosion Corner," an untidy section of Miami International Airport.

In 1964, his first marriage came apart. The two daughters stayed with their mother. In 1968, he married Jill Bellamy, a gourmet cook on Australian TV. Soon there were two more children, a girl and a boy.

The U.S. government didn't exactly forget about its ace. In 1972, the Central Intelligence Agency suddenly needed him. Could a hot pilot rip off a Russian-built plane on a runway in Peru? If anyone could, Pete could.

The CIA fixed him up with false credentials and a disguise. "He didn't like the way they made him look," said one of Pete's copilots. "They made him wear a hairpiece."

The CIA still won't talk about what happened. Pete delivered the prize to Patrick Air Force Base, near Cape Canaveral.

"I know for a fact that he did it," said Chrissie Kengla, friend of 16 years.

"It was years ago," said his second wife. "... It's past. I don't think I should talk about it. He did it for his children."

The great trauma in the life of Manuel J. Fernandez, Jr., began April 24, 1980, after a routine flight to Barranquilla, Colombia, to deliver air conditioners and refrigerators.

On the flight back to Miami, 90 minutes after takeoff, one of the four engines of the lumbering, 25-year-old DC-6 conked out at 10,000 feet. "It was running wild. We couldn't feather it and the plane was losing altitude," the copilot said.

Pete returned to Barranquilla. ''We radioed ahead saying we had an emergency."

When the decrepit craft taxied to a stop, Colombian air force officers collared Pete and his two crewmen and searched the plane for drugs. There weren't any.

A Colombian official confirmed that last week: "No drugs were found on the plane," acknowledged Pedro Luna-Ruiz, captain in the Departamento Administrative de Seguridad.

That didn't make much difference to the Colombians, whose nation thrives on illicit drug exportation. They came up with an allegation anyway: "Violation of Colombian airspace." Pete hadn't filed a flight plan for the emergency trip back to Barranquilla.

The fine: 2 million pesos each—$50,000.

In his billfold, Pete had $25, snapshots of his kids and his pilot's license. The Colombians threw the three American fliers in jail.

"It was nothing but a shakedown," the copilot said. "We were being held for ransom."

The three fliers hired a Colombian lawyer. He argued their innocence before a provincial governor. "Guilty," he ruled.

"Pete was livid," the copilot said. "He said he'd have to wipe out his savings and sell his children to come up with his money."

The Americans refused to pay the $50,000 each. The Colombians lowered the fine to $25,000 each. Still they refused. So there they stayed for seven weeks.

"He ate nothing but plantains and slept on a tile floor," said Laurie, his daughter. "He used his jacket for a pillow."

"Nobody helped us except our families," the copilot said.

A U.S. consul visited three times. "He told us there wasn't anything he could do. He wouldn't even get Pete cigarettes."

The consul, Bob Arthurs, denied it. "I made sure they weren't abused," he said. "They were in good shape."

After 49 days of incarceration, the fliers gave in. They telephoned their families and asked them to wire the $75,000.

"If they hadn't paid the fine, they would have stayed five years," the Colombian captain said. The Colombians confiscated the DC-6. It now flies in the Colombian air force.

Pete got back to Miami on Father's Day. "He'd aged tremendously," said Marsha Baygents, Pete's niece. "He thought a lot of people would (help) him out. No one did."

"He didn't whine or cry," said Chrissie Kengla. "But I could tell he was very upset. He'd helped the government all his life and when he needed help the most, there wasn't any."

Not only did the ordeal cost Pete more than $25,000, but it also kept him from earning a living for two months.

"He was dead broke," said Killough. a former Delta Air Lines pilot.

"Destitute," friend Bob Hanson called him.

If Pete was like other free-lance pilots in South Florida, he had ample opportunity to fly for big money. Tales of overnight wealth are legion.

"There isn't a pilot in South Florida who hasn't been approached by dopers," said the copilot.

Pete wasn't an absolute novice. The information here is murky. Maj. Nick Navarro, a Broward County narcotics detective, knew Pete, and said he'd been "helpful" in drug investigations this year. He wouldn't say how or under what circumstances.

Pete wasn't working for the cops the night he crashed, the major said. He couldn't imagine Pete smuggling drugs for cash.

Another Broward detective, Rick Riggio, wasn't so sure. "He was bitter and he had bills to pay."

On Sept. 5, Pete took a souped-up plane, a customized Geronimo, to Homestead General Aviation Airport.

Pete and his buddy James Killough bought spare wheels for the Geronimo for landing in "rough territory." Pete and Killough, who also owns a Geronimo, paid $1,000 in cash for the wheels.

Pete said he was buying them for Dr. William A. Becker, who in fact once owned the plane. But he no longer owned it.

It was registered to one Franklin L. Williams, whose address is a for-hire mail drop, a man unavailable for comment.

Early the morning of Oct. 17, America's ace told his wife he "would be hauling some lobsters in South Florida" that Friday.

At 7 A.M., he lifted off the runway at Homestead. He didn't bother to file a flight plan, a ritual he'd performed a thousand times.

Where he flew that day is conjecture. Some drug pilots pick up loads in Jamaica and deposit them in the Bahamas.

Pete ignored Bahamian rules, failing to notify air controllers that he was in their skies.

His apparent destination: a lonely asphalt road on Grand Bahama Island. In the cockpit, he had a high-powered walkie-talkie. Airborne dopers use them for talking to accomplices on the ground.

If anyone saw Pete's final moment of life, he didn't wait around. Bahamian police discovered the charred wreckage at 7:30 the next morning, smoldering still.

Precisely what occurred is uncertain. Pete may well have lost control of the airplane when he spotted power lines on the shoulder of the road, Bahamian police speculated. He clipped pine trees, then slammed to earth.

His body, burned and broken, lay crumpled face-down in the tall grass off the road. Fire destroyed a cargo of marijuana—except for 178 pounds hurled from the plane on impact.

"Pot was burning all morning," said Richardson Campbell, a reporter for the *Freeport News,* "I had to move away from the smoke to keep from getting high."

The evidence seemed irrefutable. The manner of his death, more than the death itself, shocked his family and friends.

Pete's wife, Jill, feared that the cargo of pot would cost him a burial at Arlington National Cemetery.

"All he wanted was to be buried at Arlington," she said. "Now maybe they won't let him."

Ten days after the crash, a team of six horses, their three riders ramrod straight, pulled a heavy caisson over the gentle Virginia hills. The caisson bore a casket, an American flag draped so its stars fell over the dead man's heart.

A brass band began the refrain, "Oh, beautiful, for spacious skies. . . ."

Seven riflemen raised their weapons to the sky and fired three volleys—a 21-gun salute. A chaplain prayed. A bugler sounded "Taps."

Grave number 1423 lay open. There, the United States of America put to rest Manuel J. Fernandez, Jr., ace.

OLD GLORY

Don M. Ives, Bridgeport, CT

Col. Jenkins' letter in Vol. 27, No. 1, page 73, of the *Journal's* News & Comment is correct on Chamberlin and Levine. It was pilot Hill who was lost. We were avid aero buffs during this period and kept a number of items as well as collecting more contemporary data later to confirm our memories.

James DeWitt Hill was pilot, Lloyd Wilson Bertaud copilot/navigator, and Philip A. Payne, 225-lb. managing editor of the *New York Daily Mirror,* backer of the flight, as passenger, went down in the Atlantic shortly after 4:00 A.M., Sept. 7, 1927, by unknown cause in Fokker F.VIIa *Old Glory* after an SOS. They had left Old Orchard Beach, ME, at 12:53 P.M. the previous day. On the 12th the Canadian ship, SS KYLE, chartered by the *Daily Mirror,* located parts of the fuselage, wing and landing gear. Pictures, an interior sketch and notes are enclosed "to make the cheese more binding."

Hill, 42, born in Scottdale, PA, began flying in 1912 under Glenn Curtiss in San Diego and had over 5,000 hours in the air. He flew the Cleveland-Hadley Field, New Brunswick, N.J., route for the U.S. P.O. Dept. from July 1, 1924, until July 11, 1927, totaling 1,828.36 hours and 202,027 miles.

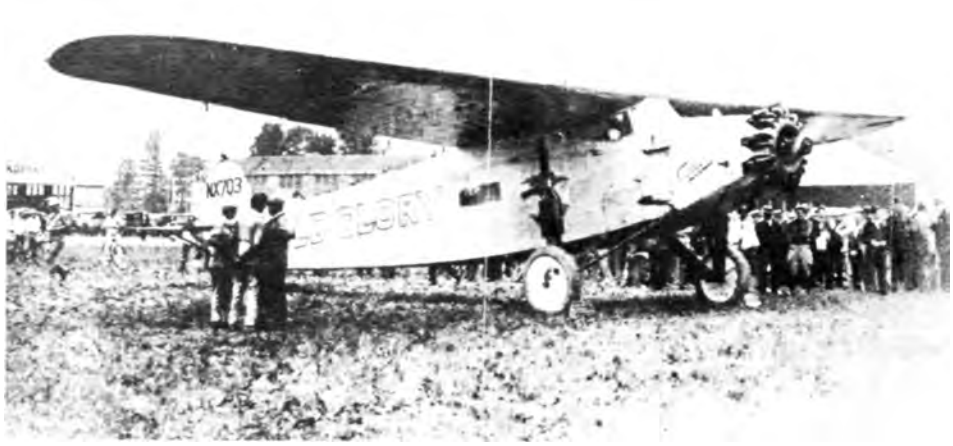
Bertaud, 32, born in Alameda, CA, was U.S. Air Service lieutenant during World War I and had become a "licensed" pilot at 18. He had been copilot with Eddie Stinson in a Junkers F.13 (B.M.W. Ilia, 185 hp), known in U.S. as JL-6, being imported by John L. Larsen, on a world's endurance record from Roosevelt Field (site of present trotter raceway) of 26 hrs. 19 min. and 7 sec, Dec. 29-30, 1921. For a while during April/May 1927 he was to fly *Columbia* with Clarence Chamberlin but differences with Levine ended that. On the same airmail route as Hill, he flew from Nov. 16, 1924, to July 2, 1927, totaling 1,443.19 hours and 141,806 miles.

A partial reference list for those desiring more details plus confirmation of above: *Aviation,* Aug. 8, page 306, Sept. 19, 1927, page 673; *Aero Digest,* Sept., page 257, Oct. 1927, page 398; *Saga of the U.S. Air Mail Service,* Air Mail Pioneers, Inc., 1962, pages 100-101, pages 18, 23, 52; *Aviation,* Jan. 9, 1922, page 38; *Aircraft Year Book 1922,* page 242; also contemporary newspapers as microfilmed in large libraries such as the New York Public Library on Fifth Ave., Manhattan; also *Aerial Age Weekly,* Jan. 9, 1922, page 413.

ROSS HADLEY'S STEARMAN

John Underwood, Glendale, CA

Re Dusty Carter's comments on Ross Hadley's NC/NR8809: Hadley took the Stearman to Europe twice, first in April 1929



Fokker F.Vila *Old Glory* (450-hp Bristol *Jupiter* running up at NE corner of Curtiss Field, Mineola.
(Photo copied from Sept. 1927 *Airplanes* & *Airports)*

for about nine months of touring and again in November 1930 for the seven-month tour. He was accompanied by Chet Loomis the first time and by John Pratt, a noted sailplane pilot, the second.

Hank Kavelaars' photo was taken in 1929, not during the Singapore sojourn. If you will examine the original photograph closely you will see the name CHET partially obscured by the leading interplane strut.

The saga of 8809 would fill a book. Hadley taught an Italian countess to fly the Stearman, then married her (or maybe it was the other way around). The young lady became so proficient that she was able to persuade a general of the Regia Aeronautica to lend her his personal fighter for an air show display of formation flying. Later, in California, she flew the Keith Rider R-2 in preparation for an attempt on the feminine speed record, which did not come off.

8809 was involved in at least one serious mishap in Europe, which necessitated repairs in France. There was a nose-over at Dijon in October 1929 and an incident (ground loop?) in the vicinity of Paris with at least one passenger perched on the leading edge of the wing.

Dusty may be correct in his conclusion about the restricted license, but I think it was applied before the 1930 departure. It is known that two 15-gallon tanks were installed at some point, which might explain the R-prefix.

FORUM OF FLIGHT—SUMMER '81

John Underwood, Glendale, CA

The Summer '81 Forum of Flight sequence begs for comment. First off, it is not the Lockheed Alcor. X962Y was the Glendale-built Loughead Bros. Duo-Four, an obvious Vega spinoff which featured a pair of close-coupled 125-hp Menasco Pirates placed horizontally in the nose. The idea was to improve streamlining and enhance single-engine performance and safety. It had nothing to do with the Lockheed company in Burbank. The corporation principals were Allen Loughead and his brother Malcolm, who had changed the spelling of his name to Lockheed, Jack Maddux of TWA, oilman Earl P. Halliburton and Senator William McAdoo. This group, incidentally, did have aspirations to take over the Burbank enterprise.

The scene is Rosamond Dry Lake, c. March 1931. I am not certain of the exact details but the pilot (TWA's Eddie Bellande) is said to have lost control, possibly due to a severe crosswind, and X962Y ground-looped violently, casting off the right main l.g. assembly and shearing off the horizontal tail surfaces on the same side. The car, which may have carried a cameraman, was too close to the action and got clipped. It was not a collision between the car and the aircraft which precipitated the accident as has been stated in print from time to time.

X962Y was not too badly damaged and was back in Glendale by mid-May making demonstrations as the Olympic Duo-Four. It was outfitted with 200-hp 6-cylinder Menasco Buccaneers and emerged in February 1934 as the Alcor Duo-Six. Frank Clarke was the test pilot, later replaced by Parker Abbott. Pancho Barnes, reputed to have been a P-38 test pilot during the war (pure fiction), may have flown it once or twice, giving rise to the myth about her being a test pilot. In actual fact, her active flying days were pretty well behind her at that time, according to son Bill Barnes.

I don't know the ultimate fate of X962Y. One of its engines was borrowed surreptitiously to reactivate the Rider R-6 racer. Al, undaunted by on-again-off-again backing, moved to Oakland, convinced that he had the right formula. The Alcor C-6 evolved in 1937. It suffered from flutter and was abandoned by its crew during testing.

MILES MOHAWK—LINDBERGH

Richard K. Smith, Washington, DC

By way of added comment to that of John Underwood's re: Charles Lindbergh's Miles *Mohawk* in the *Journal* (Fall 1981), readers may be interested in an exchange between Fred Miles and CAL on this subject only 10 years ago. The letters are in the Charles A. Lindbergh Papers at Yale University.

On 4 February 1972, F.G. Miles wrote to CAL with a question about the earth inductor compass used in the *Spirit of St. Louis.* It would appear to be Miles' first communication with CAL in some 30 years because he opens with:

"You may remember, if prompted, my building an aeroplane for you in 1936. We named it the Miles *Mohawk* and, after you had finished with it, it continued in various hands until 1950 (it was sold on one occasion, just after the war, for 2500 pounds; so it almost kept pace with inflation!)."

Miles enclosed a copy of Don L. Brown's book, *Miles Aircraft Since 1925,* remarking, "I have personally rather lost interest in flying machines, having built three or four new types over the years following the contrived collapse of our company—but each of them failed to reach production because of the traumatic changes of government policies. Incidentally, I feel now that the end of Miles Aircraft [1947] was another record first! As you can see in the history of the failures leading to the [recent] collapse of Rolls Royce, whom I admired above all."

CAL replied on 27 February, saying that he recalled very little about the compass except that "I found this compass to be unreliable, often malfunctioning under conditions when it was most needed." This is the recollection of most others who also used it. And CAL went on:

"The *Mohawk* you built for me at Reading, under the specification I laid down, in 1936, was—as you well know—an excellent airplane, just what I wanted for the flying my wife and I were doing at that time. I had expected to fly it for many years, but World War II shattered all normal plans. Anyway, you accomplished a fine result in engineering and construction.

"I am interested and somewhat startled by your statement that the *Mohawk* was 'sold on one occasion, just after the war, for 2500 pounds.' After the war started, my wife and I gave this plane outright to the British Government. We received no payment in return. I therefore wonder who got the 2500 pounds you mention in your letter."

It would seem that this was CAL's first information that the *Mohawk* had survived the war. And it would seem that he may have been a bit irritated that no one thought to ask him if he might like to have it back after the war was over and it was no longer needed.

CIVIL B-26 MARAUDER

Mary A. Gresham, North Hollywood, CA

Re: Vol. 25, No. 3, Fall 1980 *Journal,* "The Civil B-26 Marauder" by Roger F. Besecker, I thoroughly enjoyed the article. It brought back fond memories of flying the B-26s in 1944 in a tow target squadron for the 2nd Air Force at Pueblo, Colorado.

Enclosed is a snapshot of myself standing in front of a B-26. It was taken at Pueblo, Colorado, in 1944. At that time I was a Wasp pilot (B-26s) in the 2nd Air Force.

Wasp Mary A. Gresham in front of a B-26.

LOST AND FOUND—DEMING

Col. Edward Welsh, Longboat Key, FL

In the article, "Lost and Found," page 198 of the Fall 1981 issue of *the Journal the* city of Deming, New Mexico, is misspelled in four places on one page and again on the following page. It evidently escaped editors and proofreaders alike. The article spells it *Demming.* I can commiserate because in one my books an editor with no flying experience or aeronautical knowledge played havoc with a couple of terms well known to any flyer. He also failed on second proof to catch two lines dropped by the makeup man.

During 1944 while unknowingly furthering the A-bomb program I had a run from El Paso to Riverside, CA, with stops at Deming,

NM, and Tucson, AZ, flying C-47s. After a couple months of that we were sent on missions all over the United States under a special command headed by Brig. Gen. Harold A. McGinnis headquartered at Colorado i Springs, CO.

You may relay to the author of "L&F," Ivar L. Shogran, that I enjoyed his article very much. I also found the article on Maj. Gen. Mason M. Patrick very informative.

MUSTANG MARKINGS

R. H. Smith

Regarding the two Mustangs on page 173 of Vol. 26, No. 2, Summer 1981. News & Comment, both N7377E and N7373E are ex-RCAF Mustangs, and both a/c show the markings of 402nd Sqdn. "City of Winnipeg." The rudders have 12 horizontal stripes, six yellow and six blue; and one a/c carries the horizontal stripes on the prop spinner (five stripes), two yellow and three blue. The squadron's code letters were AC.

P-35A—FALL 1981 JOURNAL

John L. Brownwell

Though I have seldom found an error in your very fine magazine, in back checking the 1981 index in the Winter *Journal* (Vol. 26, No. 4), I reread the caption on the P-35A, page 217. For your information the chronological dates involved are as follows:

1. The 17th Pursuit Squadron landed from the USAT *Etolein* on December 5, 1940. Our entire squadron departed from Selfridge Field on October 25. The ship carried a hold and deck cargo of about 20 crated P-35A aircraft. This conflicts with the November 1941 date which is incorrect. We had begun to receive our P-40Es by August of 1941.

2. The sixth sentence is correct—that we had just about completed transition to the P-35s by May 1941 for the 3rd, 20th and 17th Squadrons. (The 3rd Squadron had been stationed in the islands since 1919.) The 20th Pursuit Squadron had preceded us from Hamilton Field by about 10 days.

FORUM OF FLIGHT—SPRING 1982

Douglas Slowiak, Mesa, AZ

The purpose of this letter is to perhaps provide fellow members with additional data concerning photos featured in the Forum of Flight (AAHS*Journal*, Vol. 27, No. 1, Spring 1982).

Photo number 4 on page 70 shows Fairchild C-119G (not C-119F) carrying civil registration N3560. The U.S. Civil Aircraft Register dated 1 January 1978 shows this machine owned and operated by Hawkins and Powers Aviation of Greybull, Wyoming. The manufacturer's construction number is given as 10957. This number falls in a batch of Flying Boxcars built for the Royal Canadian Air Force during the 1952-1953 time-frame. None of these aircraft was allocated USAF serial numbers. Upon referring to most any published listing of aircraft serials, one will find this c/n belonging to aircraft serial 22132. Records regarding this aircraft show it was delivered (taken on charge) on 31 July 1953 and struck off charge on 2 March 1967. As an added note, the jet engine mounted on the fuselage top was not used during its career with the RCAF.

Photo number 5 on page 71 is B-45A-5-NA. The unit insignia on the nose of the aircraft reveals it to be from the 47th BWg, based at RAF Sculthorpe, England. If the time-frame is correct as noted in the caption, the aircraft would be on its way to disposal, or some other fate. Maurer's *Air Force Combat Units of WW II* states the 47th BWg was inactivated on 8 February 1955, but his *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, WWII,* states the three squadrons active through 1957 with the Tornado. Needless to say, the tail protrusion does resemble a defensive weapon. The squadrons and their colors were: 84th, red; 85th, yellow; and the 86th, blue.

WWII DRONES

Jay E. Wright, Chico, CA

The article in the Spring 1982 *Journal* by Admiral Fahrney on U.S. Navy Guided Missiles brought back a couple of long-forgotten memories. I was on Banika Island in the Russells Group in 1944. There were two airstrips on the island, the Fighter Strip and the Bomber Strip. I was with CASU 19 and we landed on Banika in early January 1944. We were soon transferred up the line to Segi Point and then Munda on New Georgia. When we returned to the Russells in July 1944 we found that the Fighter Strip was heavily guarded by armed Marines. It was occupied by STAG-1 which—scuttlebutt had it—stood for Special Torpedo Air Group.

I never got a close look at their aircraft nor did I ever see any in the air. However, the road between our camp and the Bomber Strip ran close to the Fighter Strip and I could see the drones from a distance as we rattled by, swaying in the back of our six-by-six truck. We left for home in August and I never learned any more about STAG-1 until I read Admiral Fahrney's article.

In the same article he briefly mentioned the army's experiments with drones. I assume they ran along on a somewhat parallel course with the navy's. In late 1941 or early 1942 I was stationed at Naval Air Station, Dallas (Hensley Field); on the other side of the field was an army hangar and aviation unit. One afternoon a flight of nine Douglas 0-38s landed and taxied to the army hangar. The strange thing about these airplanes was that they had all been converted to tricycle gear. Once again scuttlebutt said they were drones with one mothership for each two drones. I don't recall now but I suspect that they all carried a safety pilot since they were on a cross-country flight. Where they came from and where they went I have no idea and I have never seen a photo of or heard anything about them since that time.

Perhaps Admiral Fahrney or one of our readers could enlighten me on the fate of these airplanes.

SPRING '82 N&C—J.D. HILL

George G. Tillapaugh, Cooperstown, NY

In the News & Comment section of the Spring 1982 issue of the *Journal,* page 73, Lt. Col. Harry I. Jenkins in comments on A. Francis Arcier mentions J.D. Hill. Here is some more information.

He was a former airmail pilot. I have a photograph of J.D. Hill from Basil Rowe's 1924 scrapbook with the following caption:

"... First night flight airmail from Hadley Field with Postmaster General and S.D.Hill. . ." with Basil's note underneath, "... J.D. Hill later lost over Atlantic."

American Air Mail Society, Vol. 53, No. 8, May 1982, states that Lloyd Berland with James D. Hill and a newspaperman left Roosevelt Field in Sept. 1927 for Rome, and all were lost in the Atlantic.

VIRGINIA AVIATION HISTORY

J. W. Priddy, Williamsburg, VA

For sometime now I've been working on a little project for the Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society. The local aviation activity in Williamsburg today is confined to a few private aircraft and a small local airport. But this was not always so. The *Daily Press* (Newport News, VA) contacted me in an effort to get a story to complement the wire service stories about the celebration in Kitty Hawk, N.C. It covers most of the points in the VAAHS report and I thought the Society members might find it interesting. I found doing the research to be a lot of fun and hope you enjoy it.

The following appeared in the *Daily Press* on December 13, 1981, by David Allen, staff reporter.

WILLIAMSBURG—When it comes to aviation history Virginia is no slouch.

While North Carolina will bathe in the limelight Wednesday on the 78th anniversary of the Wright Brothers' first manned flights, Virginia has its own aeronautic tradition. And one group of Virginians hopes to soon see historic markers dot the state, proudly proclaiming its place in aviation history.

The group is the Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society, which is conducting a study of "aeronautical events of historical significance that have taken place in the Commonwealth of Virginia."

Williamsburg resident John Walter Priddy III, an aeronautical "first" himself as the first pilot to fly 40 years with commercial airlines, headed the society's highway historical marker committee.

"The information we dug up was very interesting," Priddy said. "Virginia has had many flight firsts."

Priddy said the long string of firsts began with hot air and gas-filled balloons used by Union and Confederate armies in Virginia during the Civil War.

Other firsts include the first aircraft carrier, the first passenger flight in an airplane, the first airplane fatality, the first flight from a ship to shore and the first flight of a helium-inflated airship.

In all, Priddy's committee designated 16 aeronautical events to be commemorated by highway markers at airports near the locations of the history-making happenings.

The first major aeronautical event in Virginia was July 21, 1862, near Manassas. Connecticut college Professor T.S.C. Lowe donated four of his hot-air balloons to the Union army and went aloft to observe Confederate troop movements.

"During the next few days, Professor Lowe made several ascensions from locations in the vicinity of Alexandria, Arlington and Centerville in an effort to stop the near panic gripping Washington as the Union army fled back toward the city," Priddy said.

"The panic was checked when he reported the halt of the victorious Confederate troops."

In November 1861, under Lowe's direction, a coal barge was pressed into the federal army's Aeronautic Corps and was converted to provide a mobile platform for balloon observations.

"I guess you could say the USS CUSTIS was the first aircraft carrier," Priddy said. "It first saw service in the Potomac at Budd's Ferry and Edward's Ferry. Then, in the spring of 1862, the Custis accompanied the balloon service to the Peninsula in its first major campaign."

Near Williamsburg, one of the balloons was used for the first time to direct artillery fire. On May 4, 1862, a Union balloonist was the first to confirm the Confederate withdrawal from the Yorktown-Warwick line.

Twenty days later, the same balloonist. John La Mountain, directed Union artillery fire from the air near Seven Pines.

The Confederates too, Priddy said, attempted to use balloons. Their most famous try was during the same Peninsula campaign.

"Lt. John Randolph Bryan of Gloucester County was the first officer in the Confederate Air Force," Priddy said.

"He was hastily given instructions in mapmaking and signaling and observed Union positions east of Richmond."

The balloon Bryan used was filled with illuminating gas furnished by the Richmond Gas Works. But there is some doubt about what the balloon was made of.

"The fabric was either tarred cotton, most likely, or more romantically, silk dresses donated by ladies from all over the Confederacy," Priddy said.

The balloon was moored to a flatbed car on the old York River Railroad. Its use was short. One day the balloon broke from its mooring and drifted over the battle lines, drawing heavy fire.

"It eventually settled to earth," Priddy said. "Lt. Bryan escaped, but the balloon was captured."

The first flight of a heavier-than-air craft in Virginia was on Sept. 4, 1908, when Orville Wright made a flight lasting a little more than four minutes at Fort Myer.

That flight was followed five days later by the first passenger flight in U.S. history when Orville took up an army officer for 6 1/2 minutes.

A week later, on Sept. 17 at Fort Myer, the first airplane fatality was recorded when a guy wire snapped and fouled a propeller. Orville's plane plummeted to the ground, killing the passenger, Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge, and seriously injuring Orville Wright.

The first military aviation contract was signed at Fort Myer on July 30, 1909, when Orville Wright with an army passenger made a flight of one hour and 12 minutes, circling the army post 79.5 times and fulfilling the army requirement of staying in the air one hour and carrying two persons.

The remainder of the army requirements were met later the same day when Orville and another army officer flew a 10-mile course from Fort Myer to Shuttles Hill, Alexandria and back in a little more than 14 minutes, beating the army requirement of 40 mph by almost 3 mph.

Other firsts came in rapid succession. On Nov. 14, 1910, Eugene Ely, flying a Glenn Curtiss *Hudson Flyer,* took off from a platform constructed on the cruiser USS BIRMINGHAM and landed at Willoughby Spit. It went down in the history books as the first flight from ship to shore.

On Dec. 30, 1916, the U.S. government acquired 1650 acres of land in Elizabeth City County for the establishment of an aviation experimental station and proving grounds. The station was designated Langley Field on Aug. 7, 1917.

AMELIA EARHART AT ERIE, PA

Alton S. Kuhl, Erie, PA

Enclosed is an 8x10 glossy of Amelia Earhart taken by my good friend B.J. Ginader (whose shadow appears in the lower right), at the Erie, PA, airport in 1932. Miss Earhart signed the negative, which is in Mr. Ginader's file. This print was made 50 years later in June 1982 and is for your use.

Miss Earhart was on a lecture tour to promote the commercial acceptance of aviation. She appeared on the stage of Strong Vincent High School, Eria, PA, dressed in her pilot's coveralls and spoke without notes or lectern. She predicted that soon we would go to the airport, board an airplane operating on a schedule, *just like the railroads.* I was privileged to be in her audience.

Incidentally, your Spring 1982 *Journal* brought memories to two others in Erie. Denys Knoll flew navy airplanes during the early 1920s at NAS Lakehurst, and Stephen E. Jones was involved in the *Guided Missiles (U.S. Navy The Pioneer)* project. Both men are R. Adm., USN Ret.

I enjoy my membership in AAHS and wish you continued success.

Appreciate anyone who can identify the aircraft and keystone emblem.

The aircraft behind Miss Earhart is an early Stinson, probably a Junior "S". The paint scheme is typical Stearman for the period. The keystone insignia is too fuzzy for identification—probably a corporate logo, —Editor

Amelia Earhart at Erie, PA, airport, 1932.
(Photo by B.J. Ginader)

THE CALIFORNIA COUPE-CABIN BIPLANE

Bert Kemp, Monett, MO

In the Vol. 26, No. 2, Summer 1981 *Journal Forum* of Flight, page 171 (Nos. 13-14), appeared two photos of an unusual cabin biplane. It was photographed at Long Beach, CA, by L.J. Inmon and submitted by Bruce Orriss, and information was sought. The following data from December 21, 1925, issue of *Aviation* solves the mystery.

In answer to the demand for a comfortable and efficient airplane especially planned and designed for the private owner, the "Coupe-Cabin" airplane, designed and built for a wealthy Long Beach sportsman by Lloyd Rover of Glendale, CA, fills a long-felt want.

The "Coupe-Cabin" was tested and delivered about July 1, 1924, and came fully up to all expectations in regard to takeoff and performance in the air. Since then, in many trips to San Diego and other California towns it has fully demonstrated its utility and comfort as a cross-country plane.

Because the peculiar topography of the state of California makes it necessary to cross one or more ranges of mountains in going from practically any large town to another, it was deemed advisable to use an engine that would give plenty of reserve power under all circumstances. Originally designed for 200 hp, a 300-hp Hispano-Suiza engine was installed, and has been found to give a proportional increase in performance.

The performance figures given are the results of actual tests. The U.S.A. No. 27 wing section gives a surprisingly flat glide and the machine lands and pulls up in much less space than that usually required for the familiar JN-4.

The stability and ease of control in flying have been remarked upon by all pilots who have flown the machine, many pilots being especially pleased with the amount of vision afforded, as, owing to the shape of the cabin, it is possible for the pilot to see the rudder while in flight, this vision to the rear being impossible in most cabin planes built heretofore.

The after part of the cabin is made as closely streamline as possible, thus greatly reducing resistance and leaving the air flow over the empennage practically unrestricted.

The entire fuselage is covered with Haskelite mahogany plywood, on four spruce longerons and 10 bulkheads. A novel method of keeping the interior of the cabin clear is used. The wings are pinned to the corners of two large bulkheads, set transversely in the cabin, thus doing away with the necessity of any cross-wires. The entire cabin is lined with mahogany plywood, giving double stiffness to this part of the fuselage. A 50-gal. gas tank is slung under the floor, between the lower wings, and a wind-driven pump keeps the 20-gal. gravity tank above the cabin filled at all times. The pilot is seated in the front of the cabin and has ample vision at all ranges of flight. Immediately to the rear are two seats, with an aisle giving access to the rear seat, which comfortably seats two.

Removing the cushion from the rear seat gives access to the after part of the fuselage and a mechanic can crawl entirely to the rear end if desired. All controls and wires pass under the floor, out of the passengers' way. A complete instrument board before the pilot is in full view of the passengers likewise.

The front of the cabin is closed with Triplex glass and all side windows are of l/8th-inch Pyralin. A tight aluminum firewall completely separates the engine compartment from the cabin and conversation can be carried on in a normal tone of voice.

All upholstering is of chaissed mohair, identical with that found in high-grade automobiles. The ventilation is under control and ample under all conditions.

The large door permits easy entrance to the cabin and ample baggage space is provided under the rear seat.

The U.S.A. No. 27 section used gives plenty of spar depth to the single-bay truss and also permits the use of much less surface than is ordinarily used, with a corresponding reduction in both weight and span. The box spars have spruce flanges with plywood sides, and the rib webs are of basswood, with spruce cap-strips. All internal wiring is of Hartshorn wire, leaving no eyes to stretch or wraps to fail.

The upper and lower wings on each side are identical and interchangeable and the light tube forming the wingtip has a handle for tying the plane down or handling. All fittings, wire and strut attachments are concealed, giving the wings a very clean appearance. Hartshorn streamline wire is used throughout the plane, the control cables being the only exception. The ailerons are built up on a light box spar and are very rigid under torsion.

The tailplane is a medium thickness, double-cambered section and has proved to be very efficient, giving ample control at all ranges of speed. The stabilizer is adjustable from the pilot's seat and, like the vertical fin is constructed with box beams and plywood ribs, while the elevator and rudder are of steel tubing and both elevators are built on a single torque-tube. Two streamlined steel tubes and four Hartshorn wires rigidly brace the entire tail group with a minimum of resistance.

The steerable tail-skid is connected to the rudder wires and gives complete control in taxiing.

Three streamlined steel struts forming each side of the undercarriage are welded into a steel box at the lower ends which also serves as a vertical guide for the axle. The shock absorber cord is wrapped on steel spindles, thus eliminating any necessity of wrapping the cord upon itself in successive layers, with the consequent danger of wearing or fraying.

Two Hartshorn wires and two steel tube compression members effectually brace the landing gear against any drift of side motion in landing.

WOLAK'S ORIONS

Edward Peck, Waddy, KY

Edward Wolak errs when he implies that there is more than one surviving Lockheed single-engine *Orion* (Vol. 27, No. 3). The one he viewed in the Swiss Transport Museum is in fact the former NC-12222 mentioned by Terry Geer in his 1971 article—not one of those actually delivered to Swissair. I was at the museum on 3 October 1978 when this airplane was rigged for raising to its present position and I assisted by holding chains free of the wings.

With Swissair funding and restoration work, the museum acquired this sole remaining *Orion* from America after it had fallen into poor condition following its sale and subsequent litigation involving the man who bought it from the Paul Mantz estate. It was built as an *Altair* model in 1931 but was converted at the factory to an *Orion* 9C Special later that year after lessee TWA damaged it at Columbus, Ohio. Sorry, Mr. Wolak, I very much wish you had discovered a second *Orion!*

SWISS ALTAIR/ORION

John W. Oder, Houston, TX

Reference Vol. 27, No. 3, Fall 1982:

Edward W. Wolak's letter leaves the impression that two Lockheed *Orion* 9D aircraft are in existence. To set the record straight, the *Orion* on display in the Swiss Museum of Transport is NC12222, and not Swissair No. 167. Both the original Swissair *Orions* were "used up" in the Spanish Civil War. Both the original Swissair *Orions* (and in fact *all* other *Orions* except NC12222) had wooden fuselages. It is easy to see that the *Orion* on display in the Swiss Museum of Transport has the unique riveted dural fuselage (unique at least on an *Orion).* The Swiss Museum of Transport has published a neat little booklet which covers the acquisition and restoration of NC12222.

NC12222 was, of course, originally an *Altair* DL2A and was used for a short time in this configuration by Transcontinental & Western Air. It was subsequently modified by Lockheed into an *Orion.* This *Orion* became famous as "Shellightning" and was piloted for a number of years by James H. Doolittle. This gentleman was on hand at the Swiss Museum of Transport when the restored *Orion* was transferred from the Swissair restoration team to the museum. Although originally *Wasp* powered, the converted *Altair* was fitted with a *Cyclone* R1820E without prop control. In later years Paul Mantz installed an R1820F2 with controllable prop. This is the engine on the plane at this time.

I have informally researched the early Lockheeds since 1971 in an effort to obtain all possible data. The reason for this is that I am constructing as nearly as possible a full-size reproduction of an *Altair* 8D. Construction commenced in the fall of 1980. Since there are no *Altairs* in existence this aircraft will eventually be donated to a suitable museum. Original factory drawings are still actively sought.

JAPANESE FAIRCHILD

Peter M. Bowers, Seattle, WA

Very good Newsletter and *Journal* came in a couple of days ago. Here is some stuff you might want to use in it. Since Mauno Salo asked about a photo of the Japanese Fairchild amphibian, here is a photo of it. Might run it in *the Journal as* "Ask, and ye shall receive." I don't have enough material to do an article, but the pic ought to be able to run alone as a response to the query.

Fairchild 91 in Japanese markings. **(Peter M. Bowers Collection)**

BOOK REVIEW—EDITING

Deane R. Brandon, Medford, OR

Re my book review in the latest newsletter on the *Flight Manual for P-39 Airacobra.* It was historically correct when I submitted it but it became historically incorrect when somebody down there changed 7th Ferrying Group to the incorrect 7th Ferrying Command.

For your information, the full designation of this unit, if used, should read 7th Ferrying Group, Ferrying Division, Air Transport Command. Never, in the entire history of the U.S. Army Air Forces, was there a unit designated 7th Ferrying Command.

GOOD SHOW, AAHSJ!

Hans KoFoed, Denmark

May **I** take the opportunity to thank you for a very fine magazine, of which I read almost everything. I was especially very impressed with the articles about the Nicholas-Beazley Airplane Company and I hope to see more of that sort. Aeromarine is a subject I would welcome to see treated in such a detailed way—and also Fairchild/Kreider-Reisner.

Would you please consider another way for distribution of the AAHS Newsletter? No. 61 (1st Quarter 1982) arrived late August! Is it sent by sailship around Cape Horn? Well, the wind must have been favorable, because I received No. 62 a few days ago.

VS-44 FLYING BOATS—ULTIMATE FATE

P.B. Blackie, M.D., Gander, Newfoundland

Re: Further clarification and disposition of Flying Boats—VS-44A:

Ex Calibur (NC41880) was lost at Botwood, Newfoundland, *not* Gander, Newfoundland. *Exeter* (NC41882) was lost in South America in the river Plate and went to the bottom of the river in the same area as the German battleship *Grafspee.*

Gander Lake was next to the airport in Gander, Newfoundland, and the lake was a designated wartime alternate for the Flying Boat Base at Botwood. The VS-44s were operated for the U.S. Navy by American Export Lines through Botwood during WWII. Charles Blair, who had been a test pilot on American Export's first VS-44, was one of the captains involved with the operation on the Atlantic and I refer you to his book, *Red Ball in the Sky* for further details on the last of the Sikorsky fixed-wing aircraft.

In fact, Blair was one of the few who had any significant experience with Flying Boat operations in Gander Lake and operated the surviving VS-44 (NC41881). At one point this Flying Boat may have been temporarily called *Ex Calibur* but was distinctly not the original *Ex Calibur* VS-44 and also, at one point, was called Reykjavick. This airplane was used in the movie, *The Gallant Hours,* about Admiral Halsey.

In his book, Blair says that on the fateful day that *Ex Calibur* was lost in October 1942 the immediate destination from Botwood was Gander Lake to pick up passengers. My father, who was working with the British Air Ministry Signals Section in Gander and who was working that day, rather doubts that Gander was the destination. In any event, this point remains to be finally clarified. During the wartime temporary assignment in Botwood he remembers Blair as a tall, young (yet senior) Flying Boat captain and I had the pleasure of meeting him nearly 30 years later on what turned out to be his last Flying Boat operation through Gander Lake in September 1977. This trip was done with a Sandringham Short S25-BP-LVE in the livery of Antilles Air Boats. (Blair was to die in a seaplane accident in the Virgin Islands one year later.)

In what was probably the last transatlantic operation of a WWII four-engined Flying Boat the former BP-LVE now identified only as N158C came out of the October fog in one of the most strange and exciting apparitions I have experienced and landed on three engines in Gander Lake for gas and repairs. A picture of this aircraft appeared in the 8 August 1982 *Manchester Guardian,* on its way to anchorage for two months in the River Thames, now owned by a Mr. Ed Hutton who estimated that it cost over 1,000,000 pounds to refurbish the airplane. This aircraft is now identified as *Ex Calibur VIII.*

"SPIRIT OF BATAAN"—WHERE DID YOU GO?

Harry M. Davidson, Albuquerque, NM

On July 18, 1943, at Kirtland Army Air Base, Albuquerque, New Mexico, a B-17-F fresh from a factory was christened the *Spirit of Bataan.* Photos taken during the ceremony concentrated on the inscription on the nose of the aircraft and the serial number on the tail was not visible. Therefore, all searching of official records to determine this aircraft's history has been useless. If anyone who was at the ceremony and has a photograph of the aircraft contact the author. If any former crew members or persons who remember that this aircraft was in their unit, please contact the author. This is *not* the transport version of a B-17 that was General Douglas MacArthur's personal aircraft which also bore the same name.

The *Spirit of Bataan* has special meaning to the citizens of New Mexico. The New Mexico National Guard has been called to active duty in the spring of 1941. The majority of these New Mexicans were stationed in the Philippines when the Japanese attacked on December 8th. Those who survived the fighting and the infamous Bataan Death March, became prisoners of war.

In New Mexico, the families and friends of the POWs organized the Bataan Relief Society. Working with the International Red Cross and the Swiss Embassy in Manila, efforts were made to send Red Cross packages to the POWs. By Christmas of 1942, a few ramsacked packages were received by the survivors. POWs were also being sent to Japan and Korea as slave laborers. Until then the organization had avoided active support of the war effort in order not to give the Japanese any excuse for not allowing the POWs to receive the relief packages. Now it became clear that the most help the organization could provide was to help win the war.

The War Bond drive of the summer of 1943 was the biggest drive in New Mexico. More than enough bonds were sold by the Bataan Relief Society to equal the purchase price of a B-17. Naming an aircraft was a common reward for bond drives. Therefore the device to help win the war and take the war to Japan was logically a long-range bomber. *The Spirit of Bataan* was aptly named, however, the B-29 was to be the bomber to bring the war to the Japanese home islands. By June 1943, only the first three prototype models of the XB-29 had flown; so the B-17 was the best available.

For friends and loved ones, the people of New Mexico gave deeply as they felt the desire to end the war and bring their boys home. Now the citizens of New Mexico need to know the story of this aircraft. Where did it go? What did it do? What was its final disposition?

If you know any details please contact: Harry M. Davidson, 1408 Jefferson **NE,** Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110, (505) 256-7212.

FORUM OF FLIGHT, FALL '82 JOURNAL-CORRECTIONS

Jack D. Swaney, Las Vegas, NV

I found "Forum of Flight" segment in Fall *'82 Journal* most interesting, especially photo number 2 of the OA-4 *Dolphins.*

A correction is in order, however. These craft were attached to the 10th Observation Squadron, March Field, not the 30th Bombardment as stated in caption, and composed only half the equipment of the 10th, the remainder being Douglas 0-38Ds.

Like the Fokker C-14 in number 3 they were photographed while lined up on the western side of the old Grand Central Air Terminal at Glendale, Calif. (Note buildings in background in photo number 3.) I find this all very nostalgic to say the least, as I was there that Army Day of 1935.

MY FIRST JOURNAL—WOW!

Michael E. Rankin, Ft. Worth, TX

I just received my very first copy of the *AAHS Journal.* "Wow" is all I can say. None of the articles covered my particular preferences in aviation history, but I am not so channeled in my preferences that I cannot enjoy well-written articles about other segments of aviation history. I just wish I had known about AAHS a long time ago. I've missed a lot of good historical information. You can be assured that I intend to remain a member for as long as I live. Your publication is just too good to miss!

Welcome to the Society, Michael. But you needn't miss out on past articles and issues of the Journal. *We have a large stock of most back issues available at moderate prices. Telia friend. —Editor*

NAVY SQUADRON INSIGNIA

Brainard T. Macomber, Nashua, NH

I was pleased to see the insignia of VS-41 included in Donald White's display of Navy squadron insignia in the Summer 1982 issue of the *Journal.*

VS-41 was the squadron to which I was first assigned after completing flight training. The insignia was derived from that of the U.S. Naval Air Station, Pensacola, and from the fact that the squadron was equipped with Vought *Corsairs* fitted with single amphibious floats carrying an arresting hook. I believe these airplanes were 03U-3s and the time about 1933 or 1934. The insignia was regularly displayed on squadron airplanes until VS-41 became VF-42, officially on March 15, 1941. Thereafter I can remember only an occasional, small stencil of the insignia on the squadron F4F-3s. VF-42 must have been decommissioned after the Battle of Midway when most of the personnel, having filled out VF-3 on temporary additional duty during the battle, was simply transferred to other assignments. I do not know whether the designation, VF-42, has ever been reactivated since.

When VS-41 became VF-42, VF-4 became VF-41 and VS-42 became VS-41. I do not know the later history of the VF-4 (VF-41) insignia until 1950 when the insignia was in use by VF-11.

I was the commander of VF-12 from 1950 to 1951. If Mr. White would send his address to me at 3 Halleck St., Nashua, NH 03060, I would like to send him a VF-12 insignia patch which I consider as distinctive in its way as the insignia of VS-41.

CAPTION CORRECTION

Chandler A. Robinson, Fort Worth, TX

The caption for the photo on page 306 of the *Journal,* Vol. 26, No. 4, Winter 1981, is in error and should read:

"Harry Guggenheim, Robert Goddard and Charles Lindbergh at the New Mexico launching site, September 1935."

(See *This High Man: The Life of Robert H. Goddard* by Milton Lehman, 1963.)

INDEX AAHS Journal Volume 27 1982 Compiled by Douglas I. Pirus

INDEX FOREWORD

The index for this year has a new look. Perhaps not a "better" look, but different from the main body of this issue of the JOURNAL.

The reason for this change in type style is that we have made our first step into the electronic age. Since 1970 the index has been compiled on 3 x 5 cards which were then sent to the typesetter for final composition. This year this mechanical function has been done on a word processor, with each entry entered in its proper place as it was recorded, and stored on a "floppy disc".

It was our intent that when the last name and page number was entered, that the print-out from these discs would be the copy from which the typesetter would work. The decision to go from computer-to-printer-to-paste-up was prompted by three factors:

(1) TIME: Repro-copy, ready for paste-up, can be available within an hour from the time the last entry is made in the index. We have had enough trouble trying to get back on schedule, and the extra week spent waiting for typeset copy after everything else is finished has always been a cause of delay of the Winter issue.

(2) QUALITY: It has been virtually impossible to eliminate typographical errors in the index because we do not have the time to spend in proofing the final gallies against the card file. Further, the copy prepared on the word processor is easier to proof as it is generated, thus eliminating the first and main source of errors.

(3) ECONOMICS: As we close out this fiscal year we are faced with the very real possibility of not having enough on hand to pay all the bills before renewals come in to build up a cash flow for the coming year. By eliminating the cost of typeset copy we are able to save several hundred dollars. Incidentally, the cost of the word processor did not come out of AAHS funds. It is, essentially, a "donation" to the Society.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

A detailed explanation of the contents of (and certain abbreviations within) each section is included at the beginning of each section. Cover photographs or drawings are listed by issue and identified as Front Cover (FC), Rear Cover (RC), Inside Front Cover (IFC) or Inside Rear Cover (IRC). Example: Bell XS-1 (X-l) . . p-lIFC, meaning photo on inside front cover of Issue No. 1 (Spring).

several times' within an article, only one listing is made for that article, unless additional reference is of significant importance, or in the case of aircraft, specific models are called out.

Items contained in the NEWSLETTER are indicated by the prefix "N", followed by the NEWSLETTER number in which the item appears. All other items are listed by page number of the JOURNAL. Prefixes to page numbers used to designate the type of material presented are as follows:

p = photograph
d - drawing
s = specifications
t = tabular listing of serial num-
production lists or rosters
o = obituary

Abbreviations of rank follow standard military usage. Unit designation abbreviations are as used in each article, and are explained at the beginning of the MILITARY UNITS section. Other abbreviations used throughout this index are as follows:

A/C	Aircraft Carrier
Bal.	Balloon
Can.	Canadian
Dir.	Dirigible
Eag.Sqdn.	Eagle Squadron
Esc.	Escadrille
FAF	French Air Force
GAF	German Air Force (WW I)
GPO	Government Printing Office
GN	German Navy
Laf.Esc.	Lafayette Escadrille
Luft.	Luftwaffe
Mag.	Magazine
Mkgs.	Markings
MP	Motion Picture
RAF	Royal Air Force
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RCAF	Royal Canadian Air Force
RFC	Royal Flying Corps
RNAS	Royal Naval Air Sevrvice
RNZAF	Royal New Zealand Air Force
USA	U.S. Army
USAAF	U.S. Army Air Force
USAC	U.S. Air Corps
USAS	U.S. Air Service
USCG	U.S. Coast Guard
USMC	U.S. Marine Corps
USN	U.S. Navy
USNR	U.S. Naval Reserve

AIRCRAFT & ENGINES

Aircraft listed by manufacturer: types listed alphabetically, and models in sequence of manufacture, i.e., with the "X" designation of a series being the first of that series. Block, serial, registration, c/n numbers and proper names have been eliminated in all but

quired for identification of a specific aircraft. Special names for specific aircraft as well as maritime vessels are denoted by capital letters.