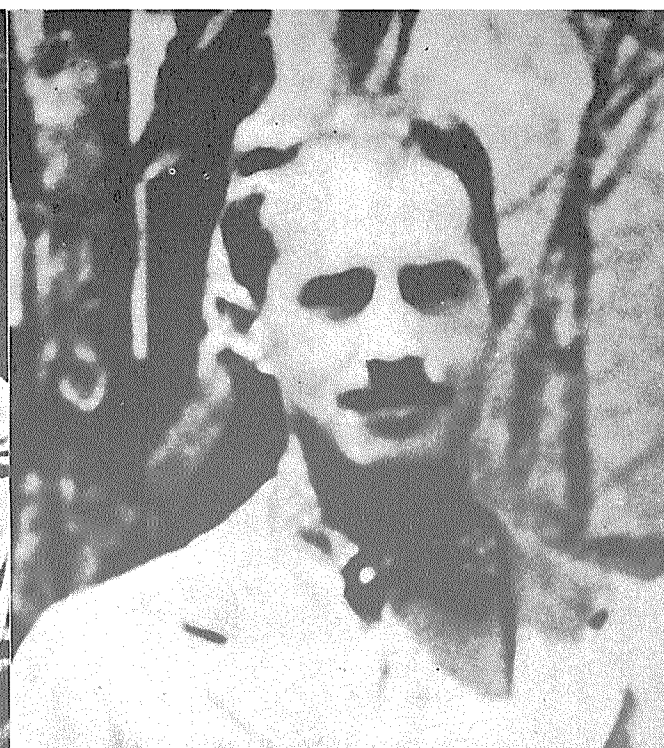




THE FLYING PIONEERS

OF

AVIATION

(Upper, l. to r.)

Walter E. Lees

L. Earle Sandt

Elwood "Gink" Doherty

(Lower)

Frank Kastory

Joe Pallissard

HAROLD E. MOREHOUSE *

FLYING PIONEERS OF AVIATION

WALTER E. LEES (1887 - 1957)

Walter E. Lees was born July 16, 1887, at Janesville, Wis., and attended the University of Wisconsin. He was a natural mechanic in his youth and quite an expert with autos. He saw his first aeroplane when Curtiss Pilot Beckwith Havens flew at the Ashland, Wisconsin Fair on September 13-14, 1911. Lees was so thrilled with the idea of flying that he enrolled for instruction that fall with the Aero Exhibition Co. of Chicago.

The group left Chicago for St. Augustine, Florida, on December 9, 1911. This was reported to be a school where he could earn part of his tuition working as a mechanic, but it proved to be a hoax. Lees received no instruction, but after several weeks of hard work he did get one three-minute aeroplane ride with Otto Brodie in a Gnome motored Farman Biplane. Disappointed, he had to work and earn some money before he could get back north in the spring of 1912 to join the Benoist Co. in St. Louis as an aviation mechanic.

After working for the Benoist Co. through the summer, Lees started going out on exhibition dates that fall with Company aviators Tony Jannus, Wm. Bleakley and Ray Benedict. Lees was so eager to learn to fly that Jannus was giving him a little instruction when time allowed on these trips. He made his first solo "accidentally on purpose" on November 14, 1912, at Creve Coeur Lake, Mo. While taxiing a Benoist Hydro faster than he should, it suddenly jumped off the water and he found himself about 50 feet in the air before he realized what was happening. He kept his head, however, and landed it safely but was severely criticized for doing it. With some additional help, he did succeed in making a little progress toward learning to fly that fall.

That winter Lees went back to St. Augustine as a mechanic with Ray Benedict to fly resort exhibitions. He remained there until nearly spring, of 1913, when he returned to Benoist as mechanic. That summer he did some more flying but toward fall he decided he was not getting any place at Benoist, so left and went to Chicago, where he took up selling. The urge to really become an aviator was as strong as ever, and selling did not appeal to him. He wanted to take a good flying course, so after saving his money through 1914, he enrolled for a flying course at the Curtiss Flying School, North Island, San Diego, Cal., and was a

*Mr. Morehouse began this series in the Summer 1959 (Vol. 4, No. 2) issue of the Journal. Biographies presented so far include: W. Brookins, A. Hoxsey, A. L. Welsh, DuVal La Chapelle, R. Johnston, F. T. Coffyn, Max T. Lillie, C. P. Rodgers, Andrew Drew, J. C. Turpin, O. A. Brindley, H. M. Rinehart, P. O. Parmelee, L. W. Bonney, H. W. Gill, G. W. Beatty, Katherine Stinson, H. R. Atwood, Arch Freeman, J. W. Kabitski, DeLloyd Thompson, C. M. Vought.

student of the winter class starting late in December, 1914. His instructor was Raymond V. Morris, and he received his Curtiss diploma on February 1, 1915. Later he accepted an offer to fly a Curtiss flying boat for Stewart McDonald in Chicago, arriving there in May, 1915.

That summer Lees carried many passengers at Grant Park and at Lake Geneva, Wisc., for McDonald. On August 2-7 he was a contestant in a local Air Meet at Grant Park, and also made his first night flight at Chicago with two spot lights attached to his boat. In September, 1915, he joined the Curtiss Co. as an instructor on Model F Boats at Buffalo, N. Y. There he took his tests for a Flying Boat license and passed, obtaining license No. 44, with Dr. Albert Zahn and Chas. Manly as his official observers.

When the Curtiss Co. opened its school at Newport News, Va., in December, 1915, Lees was sent down, first as flying boat instructor, then later on land planes. This school was known as the Atlantic Coast Aeronautical Station, and was under the management of Capt. Thomas S. Baldwin, veteran airman and close friend of Glenn Curtiss. This field soon became a major Curtiss training center, and consisted of a dirt strip about 200 feet wide and 3,000 feet long, with some old buildings and good water frontage. At its height seven instructors used it from daylight till dark (except Sundays) without serious mishaps. Many of the students were Canadians, sent down by the Government for flight training. After completing their course, they usually returned to Canada and joined the R. A. F. Also trained were numerous U. S. National Guardsmen and Army Reserves. The class, as a rule, consisted of thirty or more, and in the early spring of 1916, Lees assisted in the instruction of Vernon Castle, the well known dancer, as well as Maj. Wm. Mitchell, who was taking lessons on weekends as a civilian, while stationed in Washington, D. C. Later he personally soloed Gen. Mitchell during the spring months of 1916.

On March 10, 1916, he flew a Curtiss Flying Boat with an OX engine, from Newport News, Va. to Washington, D. C., carrying Charles Pond as a passenger, making one stop at Lewisetta, Va. for gas. He remained in Washington for about two weeks, flying for the Curtiss Co., then flew back to Newport News. He was an instructor at Newport News through 1916 and into 1917, when, on February 21, 1917, he obtained his regular Pilot License, No. 660, and then on March 21, his Expert Pilot License, No. 79.

When World War I broke out, Lees answered the call for civilian instructors. He finished the last eight months of the war as an experimental test pilot at McCook Field, Dayton, Ohio. After the War was over, he returned to Curtiss until October, 1919, as a test and demonstration pilot and instructor. He also assisted with the development of several new planes the Company brought out for the commercial market immediately after the War.

Following this, he was sent with two other pilots, J. D. Hill and Victor Vernon, to establish a Curtiss Agency in the northwest at Portland, Oregon. After flying all over Oregon, Washington and Idaho in land planes, and in water craft on the Columbia River, Lees left Curtiss in February, 1920, to become Manager of the LaGrande Aircraft Co., LaGrande, Ore., and to do cross country flying and exhibition work. In May, 1921, he left Oregon and returned to Wilbur Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio, and in 1922 he joined the Dayton-Wright Aeroplane Co. staff as Instructor-Pilot. That fall, he became affiliated with the Johnson Aeroplane Supply and Flying Service in Dayton, as pilot-instructor. They ran a flying school, did cross country work, bought and sold aeroplanes, also designed and built a few experimental planes of their own. While in their employ, he was

a contestant in the various annual Air Races of that period, usually with OX powered planes. In 1923 he won the Flying Club Trophy at St. Louis, Mo., and in 1924, the National Cash Register Trophy at Dayton, Ohio.

At Johnson Field, Dayton, on May 13, 1924, Lees joined the Caterpillar Club, No. 9, when he had a very narrow escape flying an overhauled second hand German L. V. G., World War I aeroplane. He had made several flights in this plane before and liked it. For no particular reason except that he had it, he put a chute on and took off. As soon as he was airborne he was in real trouble. By using all the control he had in one direction, he managed to make a circle and head into the field for a landing, but the instant he throttled back, the plane went completely out of control. He knew he had to use the chute. Since he did not have enough altitude to jump, he slid up in the seat, pulled the ring and let the chute pull him out. He was so low that his side hit the ground on the first swing of the chute and he sustained a leg and hip injury which caused him considerable trouble the rest of his life. The plane crashed and was badly wrecked less than 100 feet from where he landed. He was the first Early Bird to join the Caterpillar Club.

He remained with the Johnson Flying Service through 1924, then joined the Packard Motor Car Co., Detroit, in 1925, as Chief Test Pilot on their Diesel Aircraft Engine development program, the first of its kind in the United States. There he did a tremendous amount of development test and sales promotional flying in the next few years, in an effort to make this project a success. He also made several notable long cross-country flights and competed in the Ford Tours with Packard Diesel powered planes during 1929 and 1930. On May 30, 1931, he and Fred A. Brossy completed a new World non-refueling duration record of 84 hours, 33 minutes, with a Packard Diesel-powered Bellanca monoplane, at Jacksonville, Fla., nine hours better than the previous record. After the Packard Co. had abandoned the Diesel engine project, Lees joined the Scintilla Magneto Div. Bendix Aviation Corp., Sidney, N. Y. as Sales Engineer, in 1935.

At the end of World War I Lees became a Lieutenant in the Army Air Service Reserves, then later transferred to the Navy, advancing to Commander. In December, 1940, he was called to active duty in the Naval Air Service. After being active in aviation for 35 years, during which time he had flown over 12,000 hours and handled some 60 different types of planes, Lees retired as Naval Commander in September, 1946, and settled on a small two-acre ranch at Turlock, California, to enjoy the quiet contentment of home life. After a prolonged illness he passed away at Travis Air Force Base Hospital on May 16, 1957 at the age of 69.

Walter Lees loved aviation and never lost the thrill of flying. He was always a gentleman and his ever ready smile endeared him to all. He was well known and loved for his congenial and courteous manner. As expert pilot with a sound engineering understanding of all phases of aviation, he was an active member of the Early Birds, Old Birds, Quiet Birdmen and Caterpillar Club, truly one of the real flying pioneers of aviation.

L. EARLE SANDT (1888 - 1913)

L. Earle Sandt was born in Brookville, Pa., May 18, 1888, the son of a local druggist. He was a natural born mechanic, loved autos and motorcycles and became quite an expert with engines. Later, Earle and his brother Walter moved to Erie where they owned and operated the Star Garage. Earle became intensely interested in flying during the summer of 1911 when Bud Mars and

Lincoln Beachey came to Erie in July. Beachey flew over and around the City on the 29th and raced a local motorcycle rider at Reed's Race Track on the 30th. As a result of this home town flying activity, Sandt was determined to learn to fly; and he raised the money to buy a new Curtiss aeroplane, a deal which included instruction. He went to Hammondsport in the fall of 1911, where he was taught to fly by Curtiss instructor Francis "Doc" Wildman.

Finishing the course in November, 1911, Sandt and the new plane returned to Erie, and Wildman accompanied them as a good will gesture. There Sandt, made his first public exhibition flight on Thanksgiving Day from a field at 30th and Peach Streets. This flight ended in a minor accident when the engine quit on him in the air. Sandt continued his practice and on occasions took up some of his friends for a short hop. As soon as the local harbor was frozen over, his operations were transferred to the public dock, and he continued his flights off the ice. He gained experience rapidly, and in January, 1912, made an attempt to break Beachey's altitude record of 11,642 ft., but had to give up at 9,000 ft. due to the cold.

In February, 1912, the local weather forecaster at Erie was interested to know if Lake Erie was completely frozen over, and since Sandt had the idea he would like to fly across the Lake and back, he decided to find out. On February 20th, without any previous arrangements, he took off at Erie for Port Rowan, Canada, but landed unheralded at the lighthouse on Long Point, Canada, 30 miles from Erie, 34 minutes later. The lighthouse keeper was dumbfounded when he saw Sandt land outside. Sandt went inside to get warm, and asked if he could get a little gasoline. After considerable searching the keeper found some which was put in the tank for the return flight. The lake was frozen over solidly, and on the return trip Sandt had engine trouble, probably due to the poor gas he had obtained at the light house. The engine sputtered and quit entirely when he was about ten miles off shore from Erie. In making a landing on the rough ice he smashed up and was thrown clear and knocked unconscious. When he came to, Sandt started to walk ashore and finally reached an isolated farm house on the shore near Moorheadville, Pa., east of Erie. The farmer had a nearby railroad dispatcher wire the anxious people in Erie that Sandt was safe and at his house. Sandt's brother Walter drove him back to the Erie Hospital. In the smash up he had been injured somewhat, but not seriously. Sandt said that when he came to following the crash, no part of his plane was in sight, so search parties set out to try to locate it, but it was never found. What became of it remained an unsolved mystery. His was the FIRST crossing of the eastern end of Lake Erie.

This left Sandt without an aeroplane and in debt for the first one. As yet he had had little opportunity to earn much with it. After learning of his plight, the townspeople of both Erie and Brookville came to his aid in the Spring of 1912. They raised enough by public subscription to relieve his troubles, and buy a new aeroplane. Sandt then formed the Aero Exhibition Co., Erie, Pa., and started booking engagements for the 1912 season.

In March, 1912, Sandt made tentative plans for a flight from Erie to Toronto, Canada, by way of Buffalo, but later gave up the idea. He flew exhibitions actively in northwestern Pennsylvania, in Ohio and New York during the summer season of 1912. The dates included Clarion, Conneaut Lake, Meadville, DuBois and Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania; Liverpool, Lorain, Uhrichsville, Warren, Bellevue, Fort Recovery and Ontario, Ohio; and Courtland, New York. On July 14, he became the first aviator to fly over Pittsburgh; and the first to carry authorized mail at Fort Recovery, Ohio. Sandt flew in a small air meet in Pittsburgh,

September 2-7, 1912. Lincoln Beachey and Paul Peck were also there, and he flew every day, greatly pleasing the crowds. One day he flew in such a bad rainstorm that his plane was not visible from the ground at times. That summer he also flew from Brookville to Punxsutawney, Pa., a distance of 20 miles, in probably the first cross country flight ever made in that section of the state. In the fall he returned to Brookville and started building a new plane in accordance with his personal ideas.

In March, 1913, Sandt flew in Erie, carrying passengers off the ice of the frozen bay. During the spring he made a flying boat hull for his plane and carried on some experiments on the bay at Erie, but this venture was not successful. Following this, he resumed exhibition work for the summer, and on June 12, 1913, had a serious accident at Grove City, Pa. In attempting a forced landing after his engine quit over town, the wing tip hit the edge of a roof as he came in by a building. He had a badly injured leg, but otherwise was not considered in danger until lockjaw set in, causing his death on June 21st, at Brookville, Pa., at age 25. He was buried in the Brookville Cemetery.

Earle Sandt was one of the very first of the few early aviators of Pennsylvania. In his youthful enthusiasm he was determined to experience the new thrill of flying, and he rightfully deserves full credit and proper recording in the history of those early flying pioneers who gave their lives during the period of its initial development.

WILLIAM E. "GINK" DOHERTY (1886-1954)

"Gink" Doherty was born at Buffalo, N. Y., December 7, 1886. A natural born mechanic, he was quite an expert with autos. While attending the University of Toronto he met and became well acquainted with fellow students J. A. D. McCurdy and F. W. Baldwin, who were later to become members of Dr. Bell's famed early Aerial Experiment Association. Through this acquaintance Doherty became interested in aviation and later they induced him to go to Hammondsport and take up flying.

Doherty entered the Curtiss Flying School and was a member of the spring class of 1911. He was taught to fly by Glenn Curtiss and Hugh Robinson. Doherty's Curtiss Flying Diploma was dated July 7, 1911, and signed by Glenn Curtiss. He soloed on land planes, then took instruction on water craft, but did not take his license tests at that time.

Doherty then joined the Curtiss exhibition team and filled some engagements during the fall of 1911. In September he did some test flying on a new plane built by Charles Willard and J. A. D. McCurdy at Nassau Blvd., L. I. In the spring of 1912, Doherty was back in Hammondsport for the summer season. He took additional instruction on water craft and assisted with development and test work. He also filled some exhibition engagements for the Curtiss Co. that year.

In April, 1913, Doherty returned to Hammondsport for the flying season. Early in June he and Beckwith Havens filled exhibition engagements at Poughkeepsie, N. Y. and other eastern points. On June 28th he purchased a Curtiss Flying Boat and planned to start a passenger service in Buffalo. He took delivery of his boat July 4th and gave it a thorough try-out at once. He preferred water craft and handled them beautifully. Later in July he was established at Erie Beach, Buffalo, making daily flights and carrying passengers. Early in

September he returned to Hammondsport to assist the Curtiss Co. While there, he flew for his Hydro License, No. 7, dated August 6, 1913. He then went to Detroit to instruct Wm. Scripps and Barton Peck on new Curtiss Flying Boats they had just purchased, and he remained there through October of 1913.

In May, 1914, Doherty was in Chicago visiting Jack Vilas. While there he did some flying in a Curtiss Boat owned by Vilas. He flew exhibitions during the early summer and in July started booking exhibitions for Curtiss water craft, with headquarters at Hammondsport. In September he was back in Hammondsport where he began flying the old Langley plane which the Curtiss Co. had borrowed from the Smithsonian to determine if it was capable of flight. During September he made several successful flights with the old plane from the surface of Lake Keuka, then it was returned to Washington, to again take its place in the Museum. At this time Doherty was also serving as water craft instructor at Hammondsport, as the other instructors had left for the West Coast to get set up for the winter class at the San Diego school.

Late in October, 1914, Doherty and J. L. Callan left Hammondsport for an extended stay in Italy as representatives and instructors for the Curtiss Co. Italy had purchased a number of Curtiss planes, and their trip was to demonstrate and instruct Italian military officers at the Naval Flying School, Taranto, Italy. They were there until January, 1916, when they went to London. While in London, Doherty was married, and also received the chevalier of the Legion of Honor at the Italian Embassy, in appreciation of his services in Italy.

In March, 1916, the Curtiss Co. assigned him to Spain, to set up an operation for the Spanish Government similar to that established in Italy. He first set up facilities for land planes at a field near Madrid, and later for sea planes at Cartagena. When he returned to the United States in the summer of 1916, the Curtiss Co. loaned him to their Burgess Division at Marblehead, Mass., where he did test flying on Burgess-Dunne and various other experimental craft under development. In October, 1916, the Curtiss Co. again sent Doherty to Europe on a brief trip. On his return, he went back to the Burgess Division. That fall he also did some instructing for the Massachusetts State Militia.

Doherty remained at Burgess until the fall of 1917, when he was commissioned in the Naval Flying Service as Naval Aviator No. 430. During World War I he was the first Commanding Officer of the Anacostia Naval Air Station at Washington, D. C. He remained in government service until the fall of 1919, when he returned to civilian life. Back with the Curtiss Co., they sent him to New Orleans to set up a southern sales agency, where he remained until 1925. There Doherty demonstrated Curtiss planes in the principal southern cities and did considerable flying with Curtiss flying boats on the Mississippi River and at various Gulf ports. In 1925 he left the Curtiss Co. and returned to Hammondsport to join his good friends and former Curtiss associates, J. L. Callan, Charles Witmer and Beckwith Havens to form a new concern, Airships, Inc., where he remained until 1929.

At that time Doherty joined the American Aeronautical Corp. of New York, N. Y., importers and American agents for Italian Savoia planes. He was with them until 1931 when they went out of business. Returning to Hammondsport, he retired from aviation and entered another business, remaining there until his death on March 18, 1954.

An Early Bird and one of the truly hard working flying pioneers, Doherty was destined to become one of the key men of the early Curtiss organization. His efforts

contributed a major part in the rapid development of Curtiss planes, as well as to the growth and success of the company. He was one of a small group of stalwarts who steadfastly helped Curtiss accomplish his world recognized position in the aircraft industry. Doherty especially loved water flying and became so "at home" at Hammondsport he wanted to live there the rest of his life. His widow still resides in Hammondsport. He had three sons, one of whom is engaged in aviation.

FRANK KASTORY (1883 -)

Frank Kastory was born in Hungary on April 11, 1883. During his schooling he received training as a tool and die maker. In 1901 his parents came to America where his father became employed with the Erie Railroad in Cleveland, Ohio. Being of military age, young Frank was denied a passport to accompany his parents to the United States at that time, but in due course he devised a way to join them in Cleveland, where he started to work at his trade as a toolmaker. In 1902 he left Cleveland and went to Chicago. There, in 1908, he became an American citizen.

In 1909 Kastory applied for a passport to make a trip back to Hungary. While in Budapest he answered an ad in the paper for a mechanic to travel with aviator Ladis Lewkowicz making exhibition flights with a Bleriot Monoplane. Kastory got the job and this was the beginning of his aviation career. Together they filled some exhibition dates in Hungary and Austria in 1909 and then went to Paris where they overhauled the plane and installed another make of engine. In the spring of 1910 Lewkowicz decided to come to America for exhibition work and Kastory came with him. The Lewkowicz Bleriot was probably one of the first ever seen in the United States.

After arriving in New York, Lewkowicz signed up with the well known American flying exhibition promoter Frank Berger, and their first engagement was at Valdosta, Ga., for two days. The field they were expected to fly from was very rough and filled with tree stumps. Against Kastory's advice Lewkowicz attempted to make a flight and immediately wrecked his plane, so Kastory was momentarily out of a job. Since Berger had made contracts in other cities through the South, he then made arrangements with the Kirkham Motor Co., of Bath, N. Y., to fill the dates. As a result, Aviator Fred Ells was sent to Fitzgerald, Ga., with a Kirkham-Ells plane. At this time Berger asked Kastory to join his organization and was sent to Fitzgerald to supervise the Ells exhibitions. These were not successful due to mechanical difficulties. At Lynchburg, Va., Berger discharged Ells, got in touch with the Rex Smith Aeroplane Co. of College Park, Md. and found they had an aeroplane they could send, but no one to fly it. Berger told Kastory he would have the plane sent IF he would fly it and Kastory jumped at the chance. He did not know how to fly, but was game to try. Again the field was very poor, with a creek running through the middle, but Kastory managed to take off in one corner of the field, jump the creek and land on the opposite side. He even carried passengers on several of these HOPS and everyone was happy.

Following this the Rex Smith Co. recalled the plane and invited Kastory to join them, which he did on May 20, 1911. At College Park he continued his practice and in due course succeeded in making some flights on the Smith aeroplane with the 100 H. P. Emerson two-cycle engine. There, during the spring and early summer of 1911, Kastory also built a new plane for the company, using a Hall-Scott engine. It was first flown in July and later used by Aviator Paul Peck in exhibition work. During this time Kastory had progressed with his flying practice

to the point he wanted to try for his pilot license, but the company refused him the use of an aeroplane for this purpose as they were afraid he would leave and go into the exhibition business. This irked Kastory, so he left the Rex Smith Co. and went to Chicago and joined the aviation fraternity at Cicero in May, 1912.

At Cicero he was employed by the National Aeroplane Co. as a mechanic, with the promise that he could continue practice and obtain his license. They had four planes and Kastory soon had some practice on different type machines. On July 4, 1912 he flew an exhibition for the company at Iowa City, Iowa, using a Curtiss-type plane. July 21st he flew at Stevens Point, Wisc., and on September 7th flew an exhibition at the Hardin County Fair at Eldora, Iowa, then finished out the season of 1912 with the National Co. as a mechanic and doing some flying.

In the spring of 1913 Kastory rejoined National at Cicero and operations got under way about May 15th. Among others, they had a plane which had not been a success in 1912 and Kastory was told he could use this plane for his license tests if he could get it flying. Accordingly he rebuilt the plane, started flying it in early July and continued to practice on it through that month. With this plane Kastory flew for his license on August 12th, obtaining No. 261, granted September 3, 1913 at Cicero. He had qualified on what was known as the Beech-National Biplane using a Roberts 6-cyl. engine. During September, he did considerable test flying on the new DuVries Tractor with Roberts 6-cyl. engine at Cicero. About this time Kastory became associated with Elmer Partridge and Henry Keller, well known early Chicago plane builders, as test pilot and instructor, and also filled some exhibition dates for them.

During the summer of 1914, Kastory was again associated with Partridge and Keller. They made several new planes and continued filling occasional exhibition engagements out of Chicago. At this time he also tested planes for others at Cicero. In the fall of 1914 he became instructor for the Pallissard and Co. School of Flying. This was a partnership between Joseph M. Pallissard, Elmer Partridge and Henry Keller, and the main purpose of the group was that all would learn to fly. They had just finished a new dual-control school-type tractor biplane, using a 6-cyl. Smith radial air-cooled engine, and Kastory made the initial flight tests on this new plane on August 29th. He did considerably more flying for them on this plane during the remaining fall season. In November, he did some test flying on a new P-L-V Tractor, at Cicero, built by Messrs. Pontowski and Lichorsik and designed by Vought. It was a two-seater biplane with staggered and raked wings and had a 60 H. P. 6-cyl. Sturtevant engine. He continued to give the Pallissard group instruction on their school machine through the winter months, weather permitting, and into spring of 1915.

In July, 1915, Kastory was also flying the P-L-V Tractor, and that month flew an exhibition date for two days in South Dakota. Later in July he made the first test flights on a new loop-tractor especially built for Katherine Stinson, using the same 80 H. P. Gnome rotary engine Lincoln Beachey had used at San Francisco. Kastory remained active throughout the fall season of 1915 and then went to Anderson, Ind., where he was engaged by the Frazer Stove Works to rebuild and correct a plane which they had made that would not fly. After making some changes, it was flown to Indianapolis where he demonstrated it to the Indiana National Guard.

During the late fall of 1915 Cicero was abandoned as a flying field and all Chicago flying activities were moved to the newly formed Ashbourne Field for the spring of 1916. Kastory was busy there that season and did a considerable amount of exhibition flying during the year, in addition to some instructing for the Pallissard school. During the winter months, while Kastory was around Chicago, he was engaged by the

Western Electric Co. as a tool and die maker. He remained in aviation activities until 1918, when he gave up flying and went into the automobile business. In 1930 Kastory sold out his interests and moved to Florida where he went into the citrus fruit industry. He retired in 1959 and now resides at Bradenton, Florida.

An active Early Bird, he was known as the "Hungarian Flyer" during his early work. He was a very competent and accurate mechanic, a very skilled and careful pilot and instructor, and he loved to fly. During his career he flew exhibitions in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, North and South Dakota, Kentucky, Virginia and Maryland. He had few accidents, was never seriously injured, and is one of the truly valued flying pioneers deserving of great credit for his immeasurable service to the development of aviation.

JOSEPH M. PALLISSARD (1886 - 1960)

Joseph M. Pallissard was born January 4, 1886, at St. Anne, Ill. He attended St. Anne Academy and the University of Illinois. He was a gifted mechanic, loved autos and motorcycles, and soon became quite an expert with gas engines. Developing an early interest in aviation, he never missed an opportunity to be on hand whenever flying events were scheduled in the Chicago area.

In late September, 1910, he saw Wilbur Wright grooming Walter Brookins and his plane at Washington Park for the cross country flight to Springfield, Ill., which Brookins made on September 29th. When Chicago's Cicero Flying Field was opened in June, 1911, he made frequent visits to watch the flying and soon became acquainted with the aviators and mechanics. Through 1912-1913 and into 1914 Pallissard was a professional motorcycle rider, worked on a farm, tested farm tractors for International Harvester Co., and was a chauffeur for a physician, but never lost his intense interest in flying, and kept in close contact with all Chicago aviation activities.

During the Fall of 1914, while still engaged as a chauffeur, Pallissard made his first venture in aviation when he organized the Pallissard and Co. School of Flying at Cicero, with partners Elmer Partridge and Henry Keller, well known early Chicago plane builders. Pallissard bought one-half interest in a plane they were making. The main purpose of their venture was to hire an instructor as soon as the plane was finished, and all would then learn to fly. The plane was a dual control, school-type tractor biplane with a 6-cyl. 80 H.P. Smith aircooled fixed radial type engine. Pallissard helped finish building the plane during his spare time and then they engaged Frank Kastory, a local pilot, to become instructor for the group. To avoid the cold, they made very short instruction flights throughout the winter months, as weather permitted, and by early summer of 1915, after about 2-3/4 hours of dual instruction, Pallissard made his first 15 minute solo flight on June 15th. Later that day, in what turned out to be very rough air, he made his second flight, and had to make three or four landing attempts before he succeeded in getting the plane down.

The Pallissard school was active for the remainder of the 1915 season and partners Partridge and Keller completed their training from instructor

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