

over open country. On March 17 this paid off for Ellyson when he made his first "dead-stick" landing after the 8-cylinder radiator boiled, grounded the magnetos, and killed the engine. The operation was a complete success.

On March 31, 1911 Curtiss sent the Navy Department a telegram stating that Lieutenant Ellyson had qualified in "practical aviation" and was competent to instruct others. Ellyson was more modest in a follow-up letter. He noted to Chambers that he had not flown the hydroplane and that it would take a good deal more flying before he could land on a designated spot or safely handle a plane in gusting and turbulent air. What Ellyson had written to Chambers the week before was still true on the day Curtiss said he was a pilot:

I am not getting the opinion that I know how to fly, but simply want you (Chambers) to know the progress that I am making. I am more anxious than ever to remain with Mr. Curtiss as long as possible, because he made suggestions after every flight which showed me just where I did the wrong thing, or how I could have done it better.

During April, 1911, Curtiss closed his aviation camp in San Diego and returned to his Hammondsport factory. Ellyson received instruction in the hydro and in turn began teaching some of Curtiss' students, though he never took them to the airborne stage. By June Ellyson was flying a newly developed hydro regularly while waiting for the Navy planes to be finished. He noted that the lower seat and controls and the lack of front elevators made the plane a lot safer in the event of water crashes. The pilot would be thrown clear of everything! Safety belts were still in the future.

On June 27, Lieutenant John H. Towers reported to Ellyson for instruction at Hammondsport. Ellyson was now ready to begin the creative process by instructing his first student - the Navy's third naval aviator. On July 1, 1911 Ellyson formally qualified as a pilot under Aero Club of America rules and on September 14, 1911 Lieutenant Towers was similarly licensed. Lieutenant John Rodgers had become the second pilot to be designated when

he completed the Wright course in August 1911. The Navy then had the nucleus of its future naval aviation - Ellyson, Rodgers, and Towers.

Unlike most who came after him, Ellyson did not remain in aviation throughout the remainder of his naval career. He continued with the Annapolis aviation camp through the fall of 1911 and then took it to San Diego for "winter quarters" beside the Curtiss group. He stayed with the program through 1912, helping mightily with the development and testing of the catapult, and then in 1913 he went to sea duty. During World War I he spent a few months supervising the training of aviation mechanics in Annapolis, and then he returned to surface craft for anti-submarine operations. After the war Ellyson was assigned briefly to the new Bureau of Aeronautics in 1921 and then went abroad on naval duty outside of aviation. He returned to flight duty in 1926 when he was assigned as Executive Officer of the seaplane tender "Wright" attached to the Scouting Fleet in the Atlantic. Ellyson was killed in a crash while flying from Norfolk to Annapolis in the early morning of February 27, 1928. He rests today in the Naval Academy cemetery.

Bibliography

- Curtiss, Glenn H., The Curtiss Aviation Book, (1912).
 Furlong, William., The Class of 1905 (1930).
 Halsey, William F., Admiral Halsey's Story (1947).
 Hatch, Alden., Glenn H. Curtiss, Pioneer of Naval Aviation (1942).
 King, Ernest J., Fleet Admiral King, A Naval Record (1953).
 Miller, Harold B., Navy Wings (1937).
 Studer, Clara, Si
 Studer, Clara, Sky Storming Yankee (Curtiss) (1936).
 Turnbull, A. D. and Lord, C. L., History of United States Naval Aviation (1949).
 Chambers, Washington Irving. Manuscripts. Naval Historical Foundation Collection, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.
San Diego Union, December 1910-April 1911.
Annapolis Evening Capital, April 1911 - December 1911
Scientific American, 1910 - 1912.

CAPT. H. C. RICHARDSON DIES

One of the Navy's famous aviation figures died in September, 1960 at the Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md. He was 82, and during his lifetime had seen, and participated in, the growth of the Navy's air arm from its inception. He was Captain Holden C. Richardson, USN (Ret.), the Navy's first engineering test pilot and famous designer of seaplanes.

The Cover Photo for this JOURNAL shows the twin tractor seaplane, A-82, built at the Washington Navy Yard. The picture was taken in October, 1916. It was the Navy's first design and has always been known as the Richardson Biplane.

Richardson was born at Shamokin, Pa. and graduated from the Naval Academy in 1901. He took further training at M.I.T., receiving his M.S. degree in 1907. He became the Assistant Naval Constructor the following year but did not learn to fly until 1915 when he received his wings at Pensacola and became Naval Aviator No. 13.

Captain Richardson designed the first catapult to operate successfully, and it launched Lt. Ellyson in a trial flight at about 35 mph. He became the

Navy's representative on the Advisory Committee of the Langley Aeronautical Laboratory in 1913, which led to his appointment to the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics when that body was founded in 1915. His reputation was now established as an authority on seaplanes and he superintended the activities of the Curtiss Aeroplane Company for the Navy at Buffalo during 1918, the height of war construction. Thus he was responsible for the Curtiss flying boats, the NC-1, -2, -3 & -4, and went on to fame as the pilot, with Cdr. John H. Towers, of the NC-3 in its epic crossing of the Atlantic in 1919. Although forced down short of the goal, near the Azores Is., they made their way on the surface another 205 miles to Ponta Delgada. For this he was awarded the Navy Cross.

Capt. Richardson headed the Design Division of the Bureau of Aeronautics 'til he retired in 1929, only to come back as an advisor to the Department in 1934. He remained on active duty until he retired again in 1946, an officer who has forever left his mark of influence upon the Navy's history.