



By DUSTIH W. CARTER

The last issue of the JOURNAL brought a new feature to its pages, air racing. It is hoped to continue the subject with regular contributions.

What could be more fitting than to go back to the first large air meet held in Southern California from January 10 thru 20, 1910. The meet was held on the Dominguez Rancho at a point about five miles south of the present day Compton Airport. On January 9 Glenn Curtiss became the first man to fly an airplane on the Pacific Coast while preparing one of his machines for the big meet to start the next day.

Although the citizens of Los Angeles had never seen an airplane they were enthusiastic about the Air Meet that promoter Dick Ferris had in store for them. Special roads were built from Los Angeles and Long Beach to the old Dominguez Rancho. The Pacific Electric Railway Company laid special tracks out to the flying field in preparation for the big crowds that they had hoped for. No one was disappointed. Dick Ferris, in a master stroke of planning, had signed Louis Paulhan and Glenn Curtiss so that they might resume the spirited competition they had begun in 1909 at the International Air Meet at Rhiems, France. Other Frenchmen like Miscalrol and Maisson were to fly, as well as some of the Curtiss flyers named Beachey and Willard. The Wright team was represented by men such as Hoxsey and Johnson.

The planning and publicity had been so expertly handled that in one day alone the big red P.E. cars carried nearly 50,000 excited souls to the Dominguez field. In addition to the local citizens there was a contingent of 3,000 people from San Diego and even a representation from the San Francisco area. No free-ways, no automatic-shift automobiles, a walk of nearly a mile from the end of the P.E. line to the grandstand and yet the meet boasted an attendance of 100,000 persons in one day! Air show promoters today would welcome such enthusiasm.

During the course of the meet Glenn Curtiss displayed his unequalled aeronautical ability by putting on demonstrations of quick starting and take-off in a machine completely designed and built by him. In the air he was of course master of the fragile bird. While Curtiss was making speed dash exhibitions, one of his pilots, Charlie Hamilton, in a Curtiss Machine won a \$500 prize for flying the slowest lap at 26.83 miles per hour. Another pilot, Charles Willard, in still another Curtiss airplane won the spot landing prize of \$250. He lives today in Los Angeles and is responsible for the proper identification of the accompanying photos.

The daring French airman, Louis Paulhan, put on crowd-thrilling flights throughout the ten days of the Meet. His accomplishments were amazing. On the third day of the Meet he set a world's altitude record of 4,600 feet. Today we have to get almost that high to get above the smog. On January 17 Paulhan flew a Bleriot over the protests of the charming Mrs. Paulhan, on a cross country flight from Dominguez to what is now the Santa Anita racetrack and back to Dominguez Field. The 75 mile round trip took 1 hour, 58 minutes and 27 seconds and won the grand prize of the Meet, a handsome \$10,000.

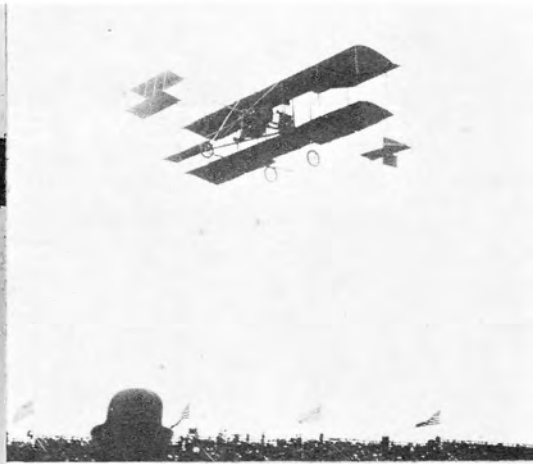
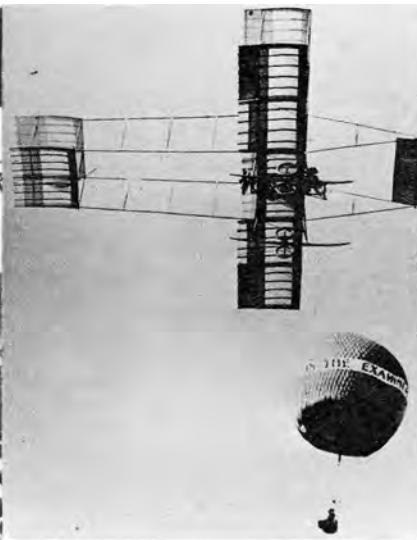
The accompanying photographs are through the courtesy of the Historical Collections of the Security First National Bank of Los Angeles.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dustin W. Carter has long been a contributor to these pages. His very considerable ability in drafting has frequently been used and, most recently, resulted in the fine cooperative effort on "The Wildcat Story" by Frank Greene. (Vol. 6, No. 4). He is a collector of photographs (his trip through Southwest airports was described in "Duster Country", Vol. 6, No. 2) and a founding member of the A.A.H.S.; see Vol. 1, No. 1.



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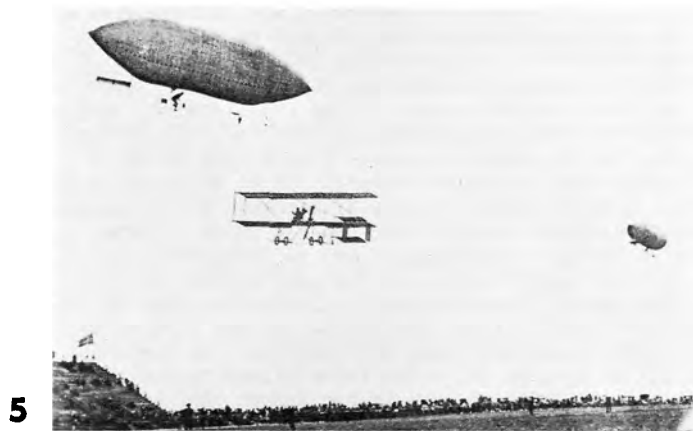
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PHOTOS:

1. Glenn Curtiss at the helm.
2. Paulhan on his way to the altitude record.
3. Curtiss over the grandstand area.
4. Charles Willard, winning the slowest lap prize.
5. Paulhan flying opposite to racers Knabenshue and Beachey.
6. Charles Miscalrol pre-flying his Bleriot.
7. Willard taking off for the spot-landing event.
8. Paulhan taking the promoter of the race, Dick Ferris, up for a ride.



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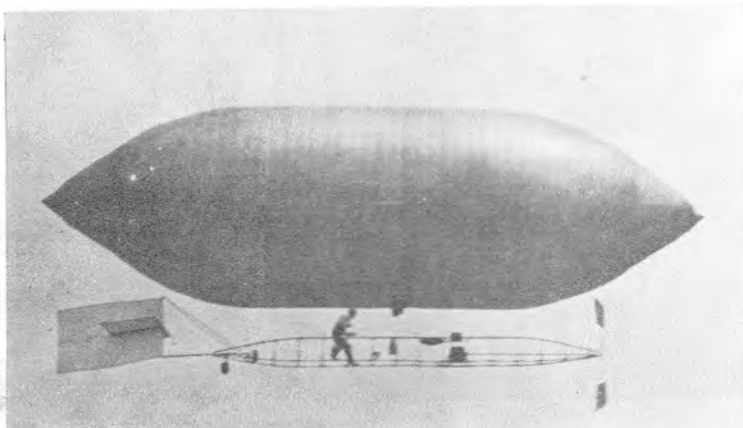
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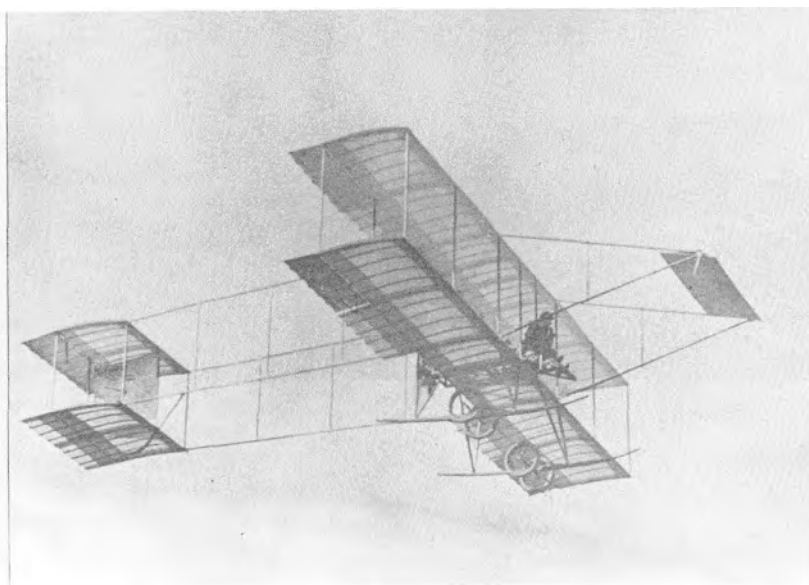
Prof. J.S. Zerbe unsuccessfully trying his multiplane.



Roy Khabenshue walking to control his balloon.

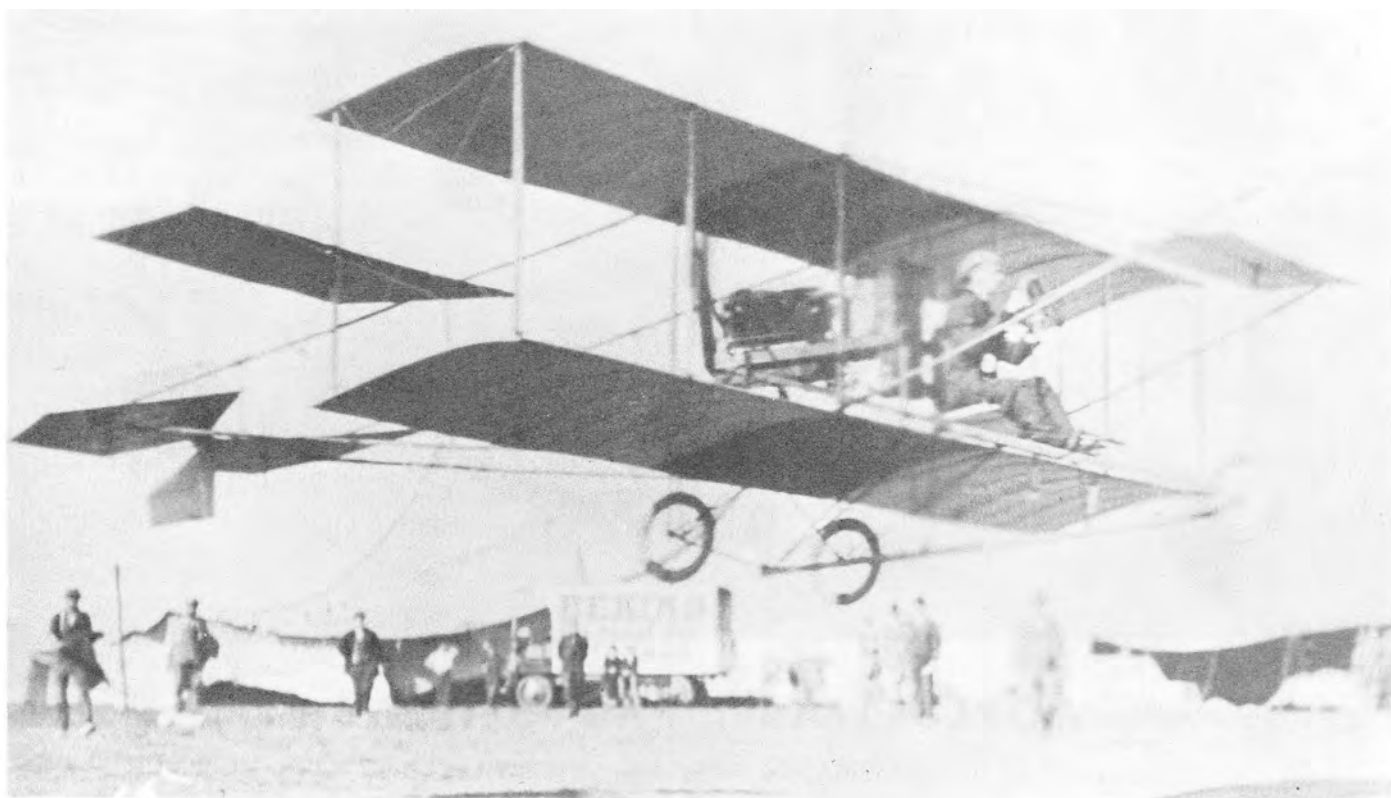


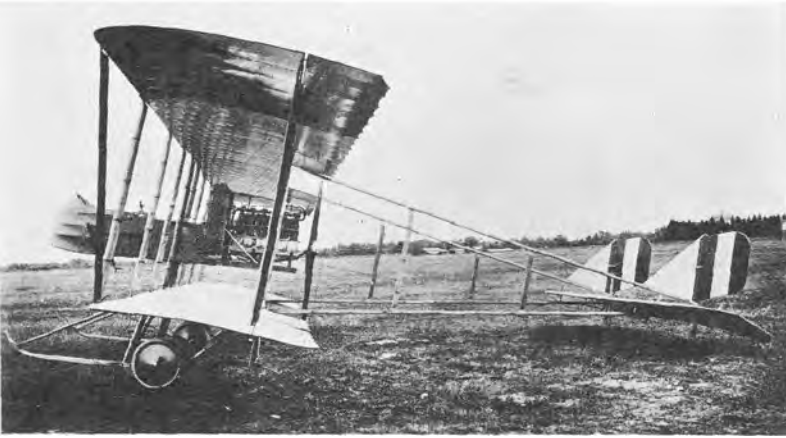
A beautiful flight view of the Antoinette monoplane.



Louis Paulhan in his Farman.

Below: Charles Willard in a fast takeoff





Farman S.11



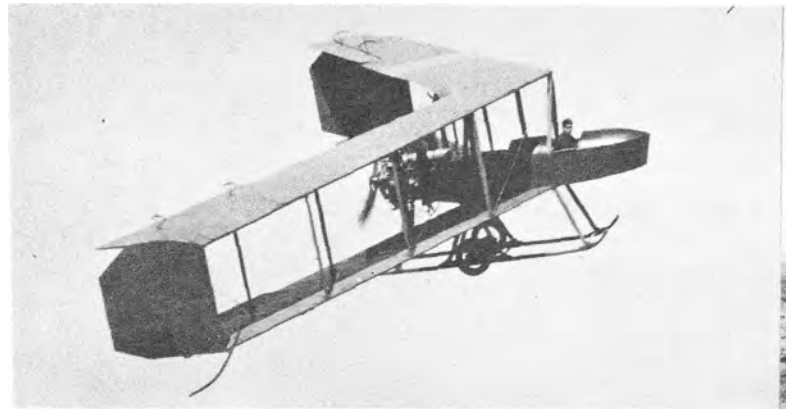
Voisin



Ago C.II



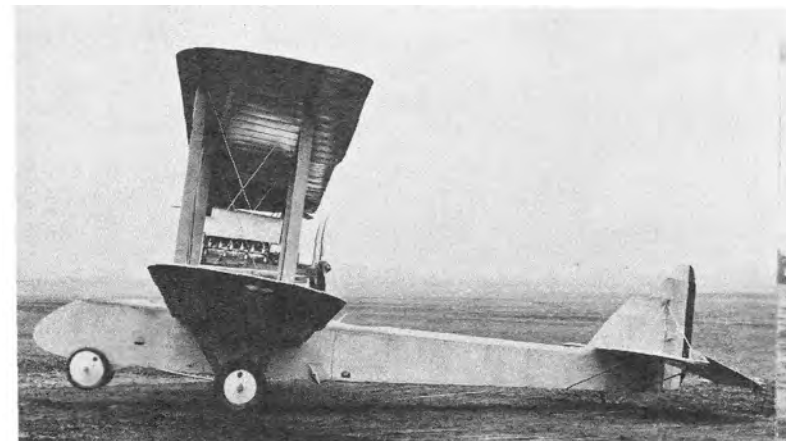
Hansa-Brandenburg CC



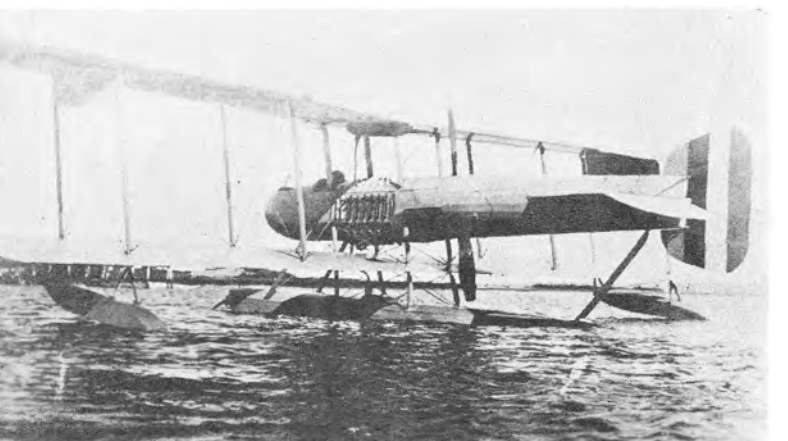
Burgess-Dunne



Albatros G.III



DeHavilland DH-3



Gallaudet D-4