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Blanche Stuart Scott Collection - Newspaper Articles, 1956 - 1969

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Utica Observer-Dispatch
Friday, January 10, 1969
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First Woman Solo Aviator to Speak By SHIRLEY WILLIAMS

Blanche Stuart Scott, America's first woman aviator to fly solo and the first woman to drive an automobile across the continent, will speak in Utica next Wednesday night.

Mrs. Scott, a native of Rochester, will discuss "Women's Contribution to Early Aviation" at Zonta Club's annual Amelia Earhart scholarship dinner at 6 in Ventura's Restaurant.

The dinner program is open to the public. Reservations may be made by Tuesday noon with Zonta president, Miss Vivian Knapp. Miss Isabelle Angelini is program chairman.

The Earhart fellowship was adopted by Zonta International in 1938 with the project supported by voluntary contributions from individual clubs. To date, 80 fellowships totaling \$164,990 have been awarded to women entering aerospace studies.

MRS. SCOTT, who took her flying lessons with Glenn Curtiss in Hammondsport in 1918, has since been a screen writer, lecturer, Air Force consultant, a public relations director and radio commentator.

Known as the "Tomboy of the Air" in her early flying days, Mrs. Scott was among 50 guests of honor at a \$100-a-plate dinner in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, on Dec. 10. The event, sponsored by the Explorers Club, paid tribute to the aviation industry and its pioneers.

Among those honored with Mrs. Scott were Jacqueline Cochran, aviatrix and air racer; Lt. Gen. Jimmy Doolittle, test pilot and leader of World War II Tokyo raid; Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, top US ace in World War I and airline executive; William Piper, dean of American private aircraft manufacturers; and Gen. Carl Spaatz, first USAF chief of staff and World War II bomber commander.

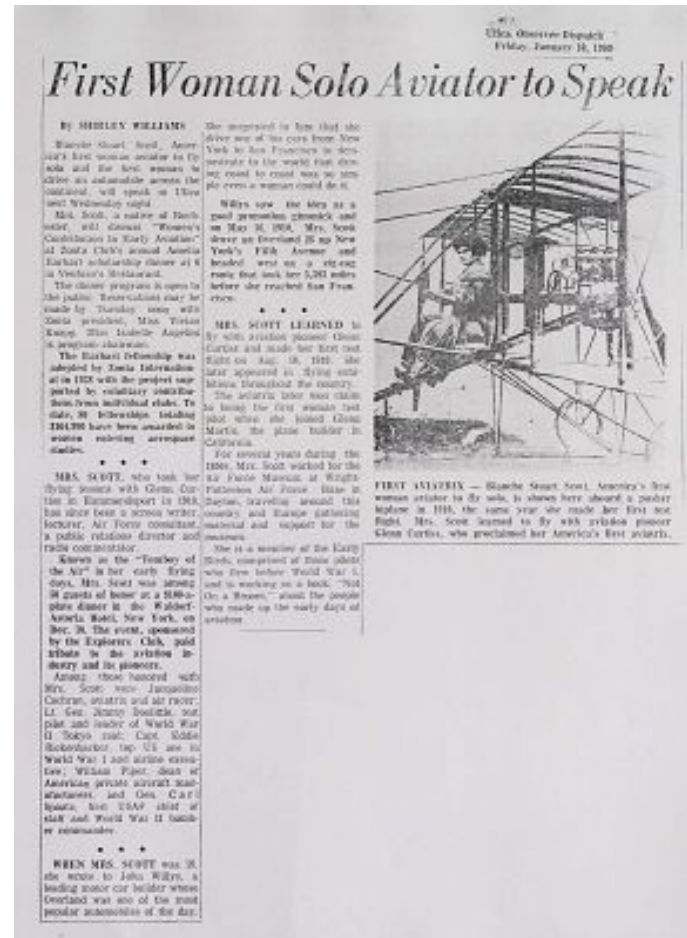
WHEN MRS. SCOTT was 18, she wrote to John Willys, a leading motor car builder whose Overland was one of the most popular automobiles of the day.

She suggested to him that she drive one of his cars from New York to San Francisco to demonstrate to the world that driving coast to coast was so simple even a woman could do it.

Willys saw the idea as a good promotion gimmick and on May 16, 1910, Mrs. Scott drove an Overland 28 up New York's Fifth Avenue and headed west on a zig-zag route that took her 5,393 miles before she reached San Francisco.

MRS. SCOTT LEARNED to fly with aviation pioneer Glenn Curtiss and made her first test flight on Aug. 18th 1910. She later appeared in flying exhibitions throughout the country.

The aviatrix later won claim to being the first woman test pilot when she



joined Glenn Martin, the plane builder in California. For several years during the 1950s, Mrs. Scott worked for the Air force Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, traveling around this country and Europe gathering material and support for the museum. She is a member of the Early Birds, comprised of those pilots who flew before World War I, and is working on a book, "Not On a Broom," about the people who made up the early days of aviation.

[[image]]

[[caption]]

FIRST AVIATRIX - Blanche Stuart Scott, America's first woman aviator to fly solo, is shown here aboard a pusher biplane in 1910, the same year she made her first test flight. Mrs. Scott learned to fly with aviation pioneer Glenn Curtiss, who proclaimed her America's first aviatrix.

[[/caption]]

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