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## **Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Acosta, Bertram B.**

Extracted on Apr-24-2024 01:00:58

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In the late spring of 1915 Curtiss and J.A.D. McCurdy formed the Canadian Curtiss Company at Toronto, Canada and a flying school was established there to train Canadian World War I Cadets. A number of American Curtiss pilots were at once employed as instructors and Acosta was transferred from California as one of them. The school grew rapidly with both land and water instruction and a large number of students were taught during the flying season.

That fall the Toronto School was closed for the winter and Curtiss transferred Acosta to the newly formed school at Newport News, Virginia as an instructor, with Captain T.S. Baldwin in charge. In addition to instruction activities Curtiss was also doing considerable experimental work there on new planes, and Acosta assisted with these flight tests. In March, 1916 he demonstrated several new Curtiss Model "R" planes before Russian Government representatives at Old Point, Virginia.

Acosta remained there with Curtiss, then in the early spring of 1917 became a civilian instructor, Signal Corps, United States Army, at Hazelhurst Field, Mineola, Long Island, New York. On March 26th he flew one of a squadron of planes flying from Mineola to look for two suspected German U-boats reported at sea off Montauk Point, Long Island. On April 20th he piloted one of several Government planes that flew in formation over New York City dropping military recruitment blanks. That fall he began doing preliminary flight test work on new type planes, and on September 15th began flight tests of the new Ordnance Engineering Company's training tractor biplane. It had side-by-side seating and was powered by a 4-cylinder 100 H.P. Dusenbury engine. Acosta continued tests on this plane on Long Island through October. In November he started first flight tests of the new Continental Aircraft Company pusher biplane with 4-wheel landing gear and outrigger tail. Acosta was rapidly becoming known as one of the best test pilots in the game and was in demand for such work. In December he was transferred to Ellington Field, Houston, Texas as an instructor for the winter.

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