



**Smithsonian Institution**

*Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives*

## **Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Blakely, Harold W.**

Extracted on Apr-24-2024 06:47:45

**The Smithsonian Institution thanks all digital volunteers that transcribed and reviewed this material. Your work enriches Smithsonian collections, making them available to anyone with an interest in using them.**

The Smithsonian Institution (the "Smithsonian") provides the content on this website ([transcription.si.edu](https://transcription.si.edu)), other Smithsonian websites, and third-party sites on which it maintains a presence ("SI Websites") in support of its mission for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." The Smithsonian invites visitors to use its online content for personal, educational and other non-commercial purposes. By using this website, you accept and agree to abide by the [following terms](#).

- If sharing the material in personal and educational contexts, please cite the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives as source of the content and the project title as provided at the top of the document. Include the accession number or collection name; when possible, link to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives website.
- If you wish to use this material in a for-profit publication, exhibition, or online project, please contact Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives or [transcribe@si.edu](mailto:transcribe@si.edu)

For more information on this project and related material, contact the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives. [See this project](#) and other collections in the Smithsonian Transcription Center.

HAROLD W. BLAKELY  
Pioneer West Coast Aviator - Test Pilot

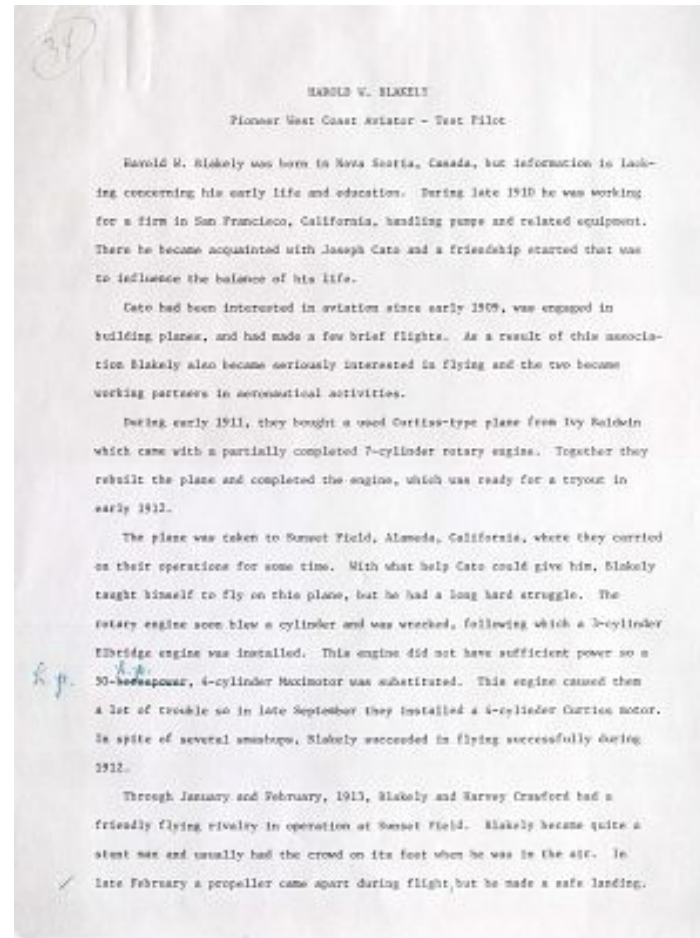
Harold W. Blakely was born in Nova Scotia, Canada, but information is lacking concerning his early life and education. During late 1910 he was working for a firm in San Francisco, California, handling pumps and related equipment. There he became acquainted with Joseph Cato and a friendship started that was to influence the balance of his life.

Cato had been interested in aviation since early 1909, was engaged in building planes, and had made a few brief flights. As a result of this association Blakely also became seriously interested in flying and the two became working partners in aeronautical activities.

During early 1911, they bought a used Curtiss-type plane from Ivy Baldwin which came with a partially completed 7-cylinder rotary engine. Together they rebuilt the plane and completed the engine, which was ready for a tryout in early 1912.

The plane was taken to Sunset Field, Alameda, California, where they carried on their operations for some time. With what help Cato could give him, Blakely taught himself to fly on this plane, but he had a long hard struggle. The rotary engine soon blew a cylinder and was wrecked, following which a 3-cylinder Elbridge engine was installed. This engine did not have sufficient power so a 50-~~[[strikethrough]]~~ horsepower ~~[[/strikethrough]]~~ h.p., 4-cylinder Maximotor was substituted. This engine caused them a lot of trouble so in late September they installed a 4-cylinder Curtiss motor. In spite of several smashups, Blakely succeeded in flying successfully during 1912.

Through January and February, 1913, Blakely and Harvey Crawford had a friendly flying rivalry in operation at Sunset Field. Blakely became quite a stunt man and usually had the crowd on its feet when he was in the air. In late February a propeller came apart during flight, but he made a safe landing.  
[[margin]] [[/margin]]



Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Blakely, Harold W.  
Transcribed and Reviewed by Digital Volunteers  
Extracted Apr-24-2024 06:47:45



## Smithsonian Institution

*Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives*

The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities. Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

Join us!

The Transcription Center: <https://transcription.si.edu>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SmithsonianTranscriptionCenter>

On Twitter: [@TranscribeSI](https://twitter.com/TranscribeSI)

Connect with the Smithsonian

Smithsonian Institution: [www.si.edu](http://www.si.edu)

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Smithsonian>

On Twitter: [@smithsonian](https://twitter.com/smithsonian)