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

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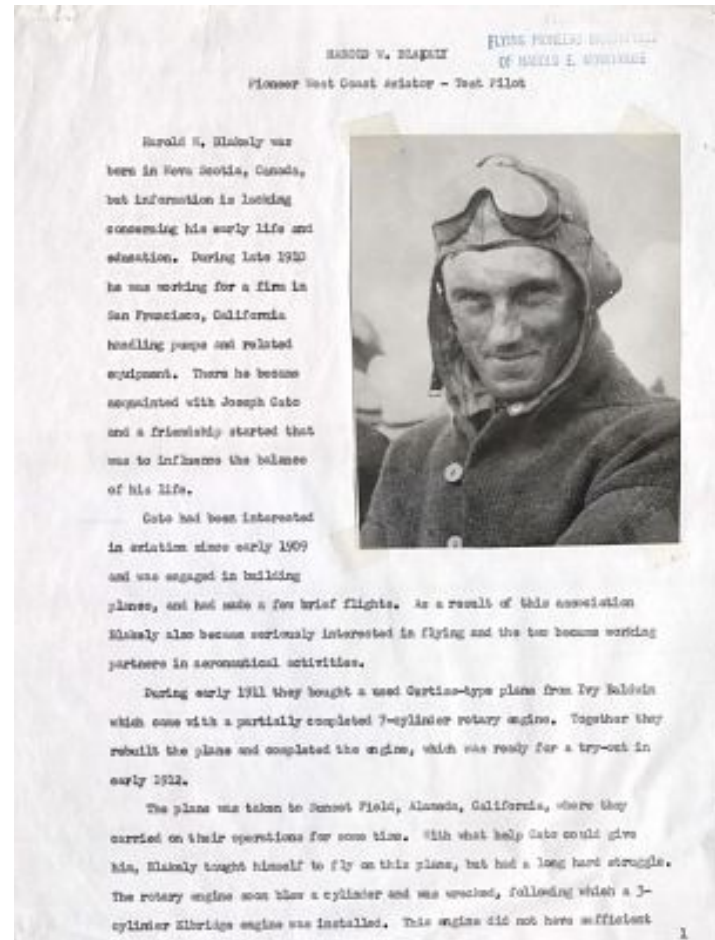
FROM THE
FLYING PIONEERS BIOGRAPHIES
OF HAROLD E. MOREHOUSE

HAROLD W. BLAKELY
Pioneer West Coast Aviator - Test Pilot

[[image of Harold W. Blakely]]

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 and 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 try-out 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 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 a sufficient

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