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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Brock, William S.

Extracted on Dec-08-2022 04:30:17

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Thomas pusher biplane with the financial assistance of his parents and left on exhibition flying in Pennsylvania and Ohio. After the exhibition season was over he returned to Ithaca where he was engaged by Thomas Brothers as an instructor and test pilot. The Thomas Company was developing several new planes at that time and Brock assisted in that work, making numerous flights over the city during late 1915 and the early months of 1916.

He remained with the company until July when he left to start a flying school at Springfield, Ohio, using his Thomas plane. Evidently this venture was not a success, so he flew exhibitions in the mid-west until the fall when he organized a flying school with B.W. Beam at Celina, Ohio. Called the Beam School of Aviation, they advertised land and water instruction using Thomas Model E planes. That winter they trained from the ice of Lake Mercer and Monte Rolfe was added to the staff as an instructor.

Brock remained there until May, 1917 when he left to become an instructor for the Flint Aircraft Company, Flint, Michigan. Later that year he was a civilian instructor for the U.S. Signal Corps, Aviation Section, at Park Field, Millington, Tennessee. During 1918 he was transferred to Newport News, Virginia.

After leaving the service in December, 1918 Brock returned to the Beam of Aviation at Celina, Ohio and there in May, 1919 he obtained Army and Navy Flying License No. 511. That spring he started barnstorming with a wing walker and parachute jumper, which he continued through the season. Late that fall he was with the Kentucky Aeroplane and Supply Company of Louisville, Kentucky for the winter.

In the spring of 1920 Brock started barnstorming again with wing walker Phil Ringel, and later teamed up with C.J. Faulker flying a second machine to develop a plane changing act by Ringel.

These operations continued in 1921, then in 1922 Brock and Faulker started dropping fireworks that exploded in mid-air after release. While doing this at Denver, Colorado the explosion occurred prematurely, parts of Brock's plane were blown off and he lost some of his clothing, but landed the disabled plane without crashing.

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