Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Cato, Joseph L.

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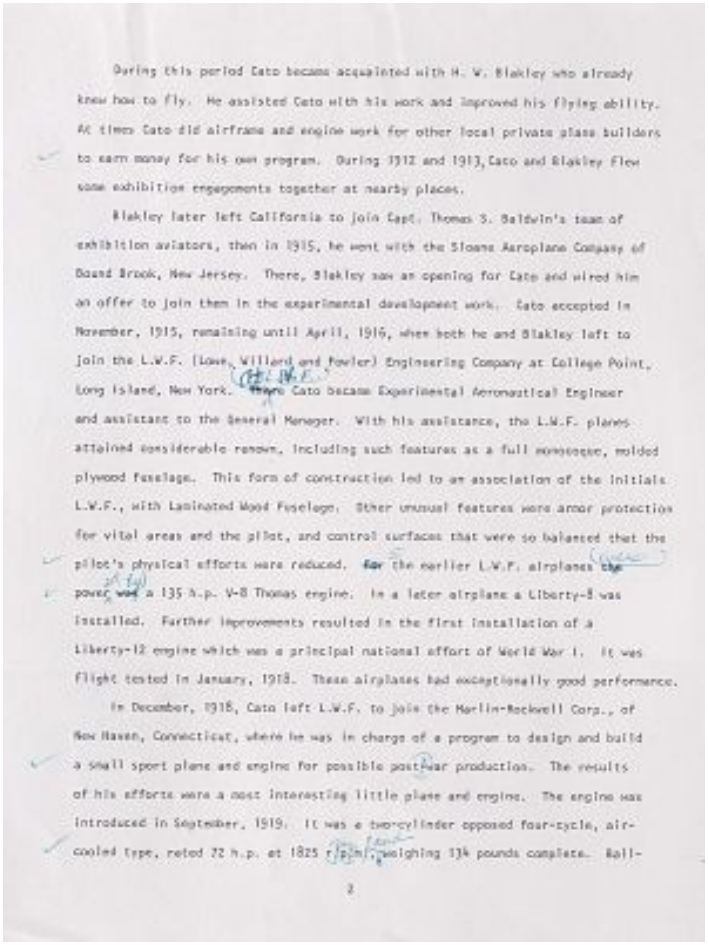
During this period Cato became acquainted with H.W. Blakley who already knew how to fly. He assisted Cato with his work and improved his flying ability. At times Cato did airframe and engine work for other local private plane builders to earn money for his own program. During 1912 and 1913, Cato and Blakley flew some exhibition engagements together at nearby places.

Blakley later left California to join Capt. Thomas S. Baldwin's team of exhibition aviators, then in 1915, he went with the Sloane Aeroplane Company of Bound Brook, New Jersey. There, Blakley saw an opening for Cato and wired him an offer to join them in the experimental development work. Cato accepted in November, 1915, remaining until April, 1916, when both he and Blakley left to join the L.W.F. (Lowe, Willard and Fowler) Engineering Company at College Point, Long Island, New York. [[strikethrough]] There [[/strikethrough]] At L.W.F, Cato became Experimental Aeronautical Engineer and assistant to the General Manager. With his assistance, the L.W.F. planes attained considerable renown, including such features as a full moncoque, molded plywood fuselage. This form of construction led to an association of the initials L.W.F., with Laminated Wood Fuselage. Other unusual features were armor protection for vital areas and the pilot and control surfaces that were so balanced that the pilot's physical efforts were reduced. [[strikethrough]] For [[/strikethrough]] The earlier L.W.F. airplanes [[strikethrough]] the power was [[/strikethrough]] were powered by a 135 h.p. V-8 Thomas engine. In a later airplane a Liberty-8 was installed. Further improvements resulted in the first installation of a Liberty-12 engine which was a principal national effort of World War I. It was flight tested in January, 1918. These airplanes had exceptionally good performance.

In December, 1918, Cato left L.W.F. to join the Marlin-Rockwell Corp., of New Haven, Connecticut, where he was in charge of a program to design and build a small sport plane and engine for possible postwar production. The results of his efforts were a most interesting little plane and engine. The engine was introduced in September, 1919. It was a two-cylinder opposed four-cycle, air-cooled type, rated 72 h.p. at 1825 r.p.m., and weighing 134 pounds complete. Ball-bearings



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