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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Cooke, Weldon B.

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at Santa Rosa, California in 1910 by Ben Noonan, Don Prentiss, Fred Wiseman and a Mr. Peters. This plane had not performed satisfactorily, but after Cooke made some changes, he ~~entered~~ flew it in the Emeryville, California Meet held February 17th to 25th, 1912, but did not do well due to mechanical difficulties. Installed in this plane was one of the ~~very~~ first Hall-Scott engines ever built. By this time Cooke was rapidly gaining prominence, and on the evening of February 16th he was guest of honor at a banquet given by the San Francisco Press. Later, with the Noonan-Wiseman plane, he carried airmail, the first official time mail was flown at Eureka, California, ~~on~~ April 21, 1912. During this time he also ~~flew~~ made several exhibition flights with this plane. *For some time he had been building for his own use a new ~~special~~ Curtiss-type biplane, with a Roberts 6-cylinder, 75 H.P. engine. ~~It had~~ having ~~greater~~ greater wing span to facilitate ~~for his exhibition work~~ flying in the higher elevations of many western cities.

In April, 1912 he had finished the new plane and started booking exhibitions. On July 4th he flew at Alturio, Nevada, and July 19th was at Salt Lake City for 7 days, making 13 flights. He made numerous exhibition flights in the west that season, and late in September arrived at Cicero Field, Chicago, where he began preparations for an attempt at the American Endurance Record. He did considerable flying there, then October 11th and 12th flew at Aurora, Illinois and October 16th to 18th at Streator, Illinois. He was flying at Cicero, using a large tank for endurance work, through November, flying in and out of Grant Park and over Chicago on many occasions, but apparently gave up the idea of an endurance flight. Reportedly he flew 73 exhibitions during the 1912 flying season.

Late in December, 1912 he formed the Weldon B. Cooke Aeroplane Company, of Sandusky, Ohio, to build land and water planes, intending to ~~forget~~ give up the exhibition business. Incorporators were Cooke, E.W. Roberts ~~of the Roberts Engine Company~~, Frank Fried, James Flynn, Sr., and James Flynn, Jr. The latter part of January, 1913 he had a new tandem tractor land biplane, ~~out~~ with an INVERTED Roberts-6 engine installed, the first application of ~~this~~ form of engine

*Also in the N.A.&S.M collection

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