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## **Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Day, Curtiss LaQ.**

Extracted on Apr-20-2024 09:58:43

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survey of the various eastern flying schools and had decided on the Thomas Bros. at Bath, New York. They were the only one where he could learn to fly for \$250.00 and did not demand a breakage charge. On his trip to New York Day left the train at Buffalo and went to Bath via another railroad to make necessary arrangements, then returned to Buffalo and resumed his trip to New York. After a week in New York he returned to Bath and began training on a single-seated Thomas pusher at the Thomas Brothers Flying School where Frank Burnside was his instructor. He made his first real flights soon after with Walter Johnson in a Thomas Flying Boat at Conesus Lake. Learning of these activities his family notified the Thomas Company that he was a minor, flying without their consent. Grounded again, with most of his tuition refunded, Day returned home. After a spirited discussion he agreed to enter the University of Illinois that fall if allowed to resume flying the next summer.

The following June he entered the Wright Brothers School at Simms Station, Dayton, Ohio, with Howard Rinehart as his instructor. Day soloed on a Wright B and was awarded Pilot License No. 302 after flying his tests on July 22, 1914. He was employed at once as a test pilot by the Hensil Aero Stabilizer Company at Cicero Field, Chicago, Illinois. The Company president, William Hensil, had invented an automatic stabilizer operated by compressed air. Installed in a Wright B it worked in principle but lacked sensitivity. When overcontrolling threatened stability Day would cut in the manual control and restore balance. He continued test flying for the company until Fall, when he returned to school.

In April, 1915 he received an offer to fly in Mexico for Pancho Villa against Carranza. Learning that Villa was lax about paying his aviators Day wired an acceptance conditional on three months pay being deposited in advance in an El Paso Bank. Villa did not reply. Day returned to Cicero Field in June, backed by home town business men who had organized The La Q Aeroplane Co. Tom Benoist, who had recently moved his factory to Chicago from St. Louis, had just

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