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## **Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Denehie, William A.**

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peting and it became a battle for business. As a result, Continental was the first to serve a free lunch and hot coffee to boost patronage. At that time Denehie was Operations Manager and Chief Pilot of the company. More planes were soon needed to meet their growing business but before financing could be worked out the stock market crash prevented negotiations.

Eastern finance became interested in the airline but did not want the Los Angeles flying school, so Denehie purchased the school equipment, with rights to use the field, and became owner and instructor of the Continental Air School in early 1930. Continental Air Express soon went out of business under the new management and the Los Angeles field was under attachment, so Denehie moved his school to Las Vegas, Nevada. After some bad luck there he decided to sell out and dispose of his assets.

Following this he was employed by the Pacific Finance Corporation of Los Angeles to liquidate a large inventory of repossessed commercial vehicles owned by the firm, a task which he accomplished in eight months.

Denehie then became affiliate<sup>d</sup> with a former Lockheed employee, first on engineering consulting projects, then they formed the Multiplex Engine Company of Los Angeles, and designed and developed a low-cost 85 h.p., 4-cylinder, air-cooled aircraft engine for sport planes. Some of its features were patented. Following completion of the initial experimental development in 1934, Denehie negotiated exclusive manufacturing right with Aluminum Industries, Incorporated, of Cincinnati, Ohio, and joined the firm to become Chief Experimental Engineer of their Engine Department.

In January, 1937 a bad flood on the Ohio River destroyed the project and closed down the plant. Denehie then obtained employment with the Chrysler Corporation <sup>of</sup> Detroit, Michigan, where eventually he became staff assistant to B.C. Roy, President of the DeSoto Division on special assignment as a liaison officer between DeSoto and the other Chrysler division<sup>s</sup>.

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