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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Hamilton, Thomas F.

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THOMAS F. HAMILTON

Early Plane Builder - Aviator - Propeller Manufacturer

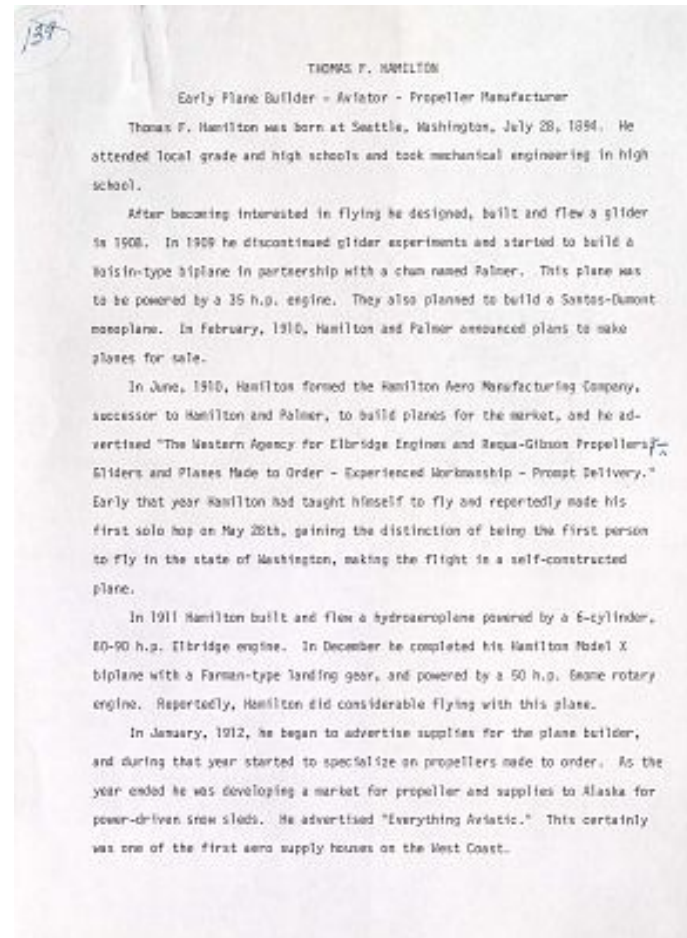
Thomas F. Hamilton was born at Seattle, Washington, July 28, 1894. He attended local grade and high schools and took mechanical engineering in high school.

After becoming interested in flying he designed, built and flew a glider in 1908. In 1909 he discontinued glider experiments and started to build a Voisin-type biplane in partnership with a chum names Palmer. This plane was to be powered by a 35 h.p. engine. They also planned to build a Santos-Dumont monoplane. In February, 1910, Hamilton and Palmer announced plans to make planes for sale.

In June, 1910, Hamilton formed the Hamilton Aero Manufacturing Company, successor to Hamilton and Palmer, to build planes for the market, and he advertised "The Western Agency for Elbridge Engines and Requa-Gibson Propellers - Gliders and Planes Made to Order - Experienced Workmanship - Prompt Deliver." Early that year Hamilton had taught himself to fly and reportedly made his first solo hop on May 28th, gaining the distinction of being the first person to fly in the state of Washington, making the flight in a self-constructed plane.

In 1911 Hamilton built and flew a hydroaeroplane powered by a 6-cylinder, 60-90 h.p. Elbridge engine. In December he completed his Hamilton Model X biplane with a Farman-type landing gear, and powered by a 50 h.p. Gnome rotary engine. Reportedly, Hamilton did considerable flying with this plane.

In January, 1912, he began to advertise supplies for the plane builder, and during that year started to specialize on propellers made to order. As the year ended he was developing a market for propeller and supplies to Alaska for power-driven snow sleds. He advertised "Everything Aviatric." This certainly was one of the first aero supply houses on the West Coast.



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