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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Heath, Edward B.

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Sometime during the winter of 1910-1911 Heath went to Chicago, where he established an Aero Supply Company to make parts and accessories for home builders of planes, principally mail-order business. His first ads in the early aviation magazines of April, 1911, read: "The E.B. Heath Aerial Vehicle Company, Chicago. Everything for aircraft, parts made to order -- props, hardware and material." This was undoubtedly one of the first such aeronautical supply companies in the United States. Although limited in sales and varieties of materials, he was able to keep the business going. He then bought out Chicagoan Carl Bates in 1912; Bates had developed some aviation engines and they were added to the Heath Catalog.

After acquiring these engines Heath started building complete aircraft, principally for his own experimentation. During this work he reportedly built one of the smallest practical flying boats ever made. In 1916 Heath had a bad fire which destroyed his original shop, at which time he moved to a new and more desirable location with better facilities. The status of his company continued as a very small operation until after World War I when Heath, like so many others, started to buy and sell Government war surplus airplanes, motors and aviation equipment that were flooding the market at that time. This gave him a new start, and with the name of his firm changed to the Heath Aeroplane Company, he soon became more active in designing and building new planes.

In 1921 he designed and began building a biplane to use an OX engine. Completed in 1922 it somewhat resembled a Jenny, but with additional wing area and of lighter construction, it was capable of carrying more load and had a slower takeoff and landing speed. Called the Heath "Favorite," the bottom surface of the lower wing was transparent and frosted. Any type of sign could be painted on it and changed from time to time. With internal wing illumination and the plane could be flown at night displaying aerial ads after dark. Heath used this plane for some time in and around Chicago as a general utility machine.

About this time he also did considerable experimental work on the OX engine

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