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## **Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Johnson, Edward A.**

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[[stamp]] FROM THE FLYING PIONEERS BIOGRAPHIES OF HAROLD E. MOREHOUSE [[/stamp]]

January, 1917 the school was moved to Memphis, Tennessee for the winter months. From then until mid-1918 Johnson served as a Signal Corps instructor at Memphis, Rantoul, Selfridge, Ellington and Gerstner Fields in turn.

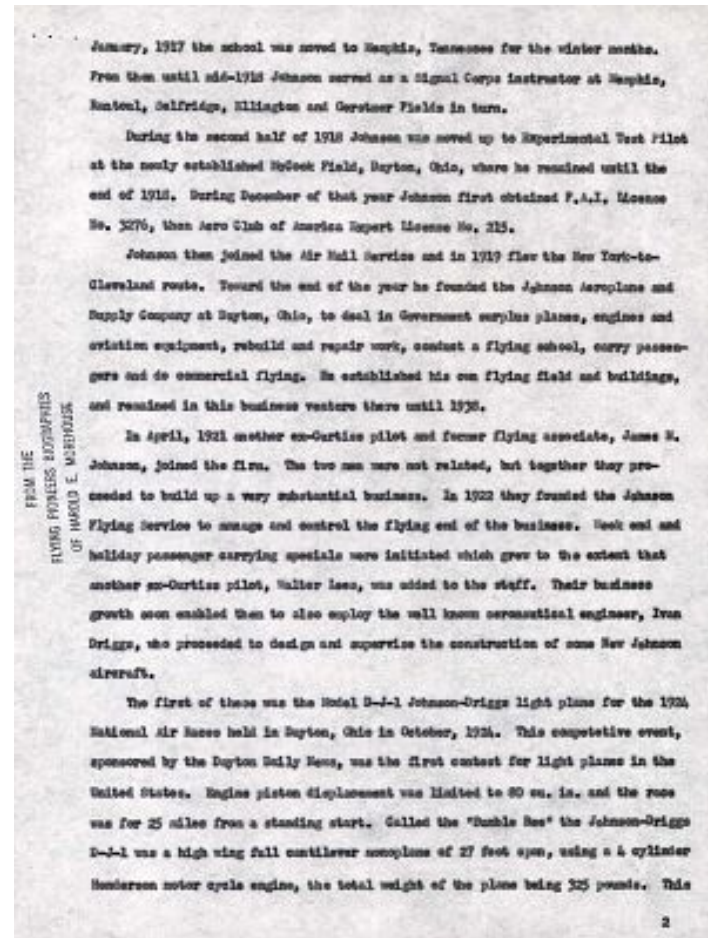
During the second half of 1918 Johnson was moved up to Experimental Test Pilot at the newly established McCook Field, Dayton, Ohio, where he remained until the end of 1918. During December of that year Johnson first obtained F.A.I. License No. 3276, then Aero Club of America Expert License No. 215.

Johnson then joined the Air Mail Service and in 1919 flew the New York-to-Cleveland route. Toward the end of the year he founded the Johnson Aeroplane and Supply Company at Dayton, Ohio, to deal in Government surplus planes, engines and aviation equipment, rebuild and repair work, conduct a flying school, carry passengers and do commercial flying. He established his own flying field and buildings, and remained in this business venture there until 1938.

In April, 1921 another ex-Curtiss pilot and former flying associate, James M. Johnson, joined the firm. The two men were not related, but together they proceeded to build up a very substantial business. In 1922 they founded the Johnson Flying Service to manage and control the flying end of the business. Week end and holiday passenger carrying specials were initiated which grew to the extent that another ex-Curtiss pilot, Walter Lees, was added to the staff. Their business growth soon enabled them to also employ the well known aeronautical engineer, Ivan Driggs, who proceeded to design and supervise the construction of some New Johnson aircraft.

The first of these was a Model D-J-1 Johnson-Driggs light plane for the 1924 National Air Races held in Dayton, Ohio in October 1924. This competitive event, sponsored by the Dayton Daily News, was the first contest for light planes in the United States. Engine piston displacement was limited to 80 cu. in. and the race was for 25 miles from a standing start. Called the "Bumble Bee" the Johnson-Driggs D-J-1 was a high wing full cantilever monoplane of 27 foot span, using a 4 cylinder Henderson motor cycle engine, the total weight of the plane being 325 pounds. This

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