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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - McCurdy, John A.D.

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with Orville Wright at Fort Myer, Virginia, which came as a severe shock to Dr. and Mrs. Bell and the associates.

On September 30th the one-year term of the Aerial Experiment Association expired and Mrs. Bell renewed it for six months while she continued to finance the project. That fall Curtiss decided to abandon air-cooled engines and made a water-cooled one with copper-jacketed cylinders. After more than 150 successful flights the three remaining members decided to transform the JUNE BUG into a sea-plane and fitted two pontoons to the undercarriage. Called the LOON, they were never able to get the machine to rise from the water.

The fourth plane, to McCurdy's design, was completed that fall and flown at Hammondsport. This was called the SILVER DART and followed their general designs but used the first new Curtiss water-cooled engine. McCurdy made the first flight of this machine at Hammondsport on December 6th, then after a few more flights the Silver Dart and the Loon were packed and shipped to Baddeck and McCurdy and Baldwin returned to Nova Scotia for the winter.

There the Silver Dart was assembled and McCurdy flew it from the ice on February 23d, 1909, the first heavier-than-air flight in Canada. He made another good flight the next day and continued flying the machine for some time, for distances of up to 20 miles. As a result of McCurdy's noteworthy flying Dr. Bell made a speech before Canadian government officials at Ottawa on March 27th in an effort to encourage their interest in the aviation developments of the Association but failed to do so.

On March 31st the Aerial Experiment Association extended term expired and Curtiss left the group. With the desire to continue their efforts McCurdy and Baldwin then formed the Canadian Aerodrome Company, financed by Dr. and Mrs. Bell. During the summer of 1909 a 40 H.P. Kirkham automobile engine was installed in the Dart and two new planes were built, called the Baddeck No. 1 and No. 2, with Kirkham engines.

Dr. Bell continued his efforts to get some Government interest, and finally word came from Ottawa to demonstrate a machine at the Army camp at Petawawa. McCurdy and Baldwin shipped the Baddeck No. 1 and the Silver Dart to the camp and

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