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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Schroeder, Rudolph "Shorty"

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During the winter of 1911-1912 they moved the school and passenger operations to St. Augustine, Florida. While associated with Brodie, Schroeder took some of his pay in flying lessons and reportedly did some brief solo flying on the Brodie-Farman plane.

After Brodie was killed at Clearing, Illinois on April 19, 1913 Schroeder served as mechanic for James Ward for about one year, then with Mickey McGuire until 1916 when he was mechanic for Katherine Stinson at San Antonio, Texas.

In October, 1916 Schroeder enlisted in the Aviation Section, Signal Corps, United States Army at Chicago and joined the 4th Aviation School Squadron at Ashburn Field in November. There he started military flight training on Curtiss Jennies from instructors J. D. Hill, Victor Vernon and Fred Hoover.

The school moved to Memphis, Tennessee in January, 1917 for the winter months and Schroeder went with the group. There they had sixteen Curtiss Jennies, a large class of students and several civilian instructors. By early April Schroeder was soloing on Jennies and continued flying practice until the school returned to Chicago later that spring. In June he was commissioned as Lieutenant R. M. A. and assigned as Chief Flying Instructor at Chanute Field, Rantoul, Illinois. That summer he was in charge of a mid-west Liberty Loan flight, then in December he was commissioned Captain and transferred to Ellington Field, Houston, Texas, where he established and was in charge of the Army's first school of night flying. He graduated a number of students flying with no landing lights, brakes or ground flood lighting.

In 1918 Schroeder was transferred to Wilbur Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio, in charge of test flying. During late August he flew his tests for pilot license and obtained F. A. I. Certificate No. 2265 on September 18. There on his third attempt he established a new world altitude record of 28,900 feet on September 18, 1918, flying Bristol military biplane powered by a 300 H.P. Hispano engine. He used oxygen through a rubber hose and kept flying until he had used all the fuel. On these flights he suffered frozen lips and fingers.

Through 1919-1920 Schroeder was Chief of the Flight Test Branch of McCook

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