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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Smith, Jay D.

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ued until April 27th after having maintained the regular scheduled airline flights on all but four days, carrying over 1200 passengers and flying more than 11,000 miles without an accident, a very fine record for equipment of that era. During that period Smith was flying well and was put on the Benoist staff of pilots. When the crew and equipment returned to St. Louis Smith continued on with Benoist on flight test and mechanical work.

The Jannus brothers left Benoist in October to start a company of their own in Baltimore, Maryland, then Roger Jannus took a contract to fly for the Panama-California Exposition at San Diego, California starting in January, 1915. There he was to give daily exhibitions and carry passengers, and Smith and Knox Martin joined him as pilots.

Smith remained there until March, when he left to return to St. Petersburg, Florida to assist and supervise the overhaul and rebuilding of a Benoist flying boat owned by L. E. McLain and Byrd Latham. This was the machine Latham used that summer in passenger work at Conneaut Lake, Pennsylvania. After this work was completed Smith returned to Benoist and during the 1915 season did flight test and exhibition work for the Benoist Company which had moved to Chicago, Illinois. In June he was at Peoria, Illinois carrying passengers for the Peoria Aero Club with a Benoist flying boat. From July to September Smith operated a flying boat for the company, carrying passengers on the lake front at the Chicago Beach Hotel. In October he carried passengers at Paducah, Kentucky, then flew to Evansville, Indiana to carry passengers there.

After this assignment Smith went to Detroit to instruct W.E. Davidson on his new Jannus flying boat just delivered from Baltimore, then returned to St. Louis, Missouri where he conducted some of the first tests on the new large twin-engine Benoist flying boat. There is evidence that this machine was taken to Florida during the early months of 1916 where Smith conducted further tests.

In March, 1916 Smith conducted flight tests of a new Verville flying boat for the General Aeroplane Company, Detroit, Michigan, then evidently returned to Benoist. On May 28th Smith flew his license tests at Fox Lake, Illinois, north of Chicago,

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