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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Timm, Otto W.

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make intentional straightaway hops until one day he found himself too high to get back into the field, so he started a gentle climb for more altitude, then made a very careful 5-mile circle to the left and came in for a safe landing. This first solo flight was made on June 12, 1911. From that time on he felt he knew how to fly, but further experience taught him he had much more to learn before he could be confident enough to handle a plane under all conditions.

Timm continued his flying practice and experimental program ~~there~~ at Cory through 1912 and began carrying passengers on occasion, his first one a boy of between 12 and 14 years of age. That summer he made one flight that almost resulted in serious trouble. Determined to see how high he could get Timm filled the gas tank, checked everything carefully and took off. About 20 miles from the field he reached his absolute ceiling and could not nurse the plane higher. The gas was getting low so he started down when suddenly there was a terrifying noise back of him, then dead silence. Momentarily surprised, he found himself in a stall but quickly nosed down and headed back toward the field where he succeeded in making a safe landing after considerable maneuvering to miss tree tops and a haystack. Upon investigation he found a rocker arm support casting had failed and all of the arms and pushrods were missing. These parts had gone into the propeller which had thrown them through the lower wing, shearing off ribs and nearly severing a rear spar completely.

After preparing the plane and doing more flying Timm decided he was ready to start exhibition work but not in a plane with the engine behind him, so in early 1913 he sold his interest in the Cory, Pennsylvania venture and went back to Chicago to build his first tractor biplane. There he made arrangements with plane builders Partridge and Keller to help him build his new plane in their shop. At that time there was no worthwhile information available when planning the design and construction of a new plane. Aerodynamic theory and the strength of materials for aircraft ~~was~~ were largely guesswork and the undertaking of such a project was by the uncertain method of trial and error.

After a considerable amount of experimenting with design ideas Timm completed

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