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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Turpin, J. Clifford

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gusty wind. His mechanic begged him not to fly but he did not want to disappoint the crowd. Turpin went at once to claim Parmelee's body and return it to his home in St. John, Michigan, which was indeed a very sad mission for him. Following this Turpin was so deeply moved by the loss of his close friend and partner that he announced he was permanently giving up flying.

In September, 1912, Turpin joined the Sales Department of the Bartholomew Motor Car Company, manufacturers of the Glide automobile. After some time with them he went with the Packard Motor Company as District Sales Manager of the New York area, where he remained for several years. Later he went into the wholesale cotton waste business in Boston and continued in this activity until his retirement, then he moved to Cape Cod and established a home near Barnstable, Massachusetts. He resided there for the remainder of his life, making his home with his daughter and family following Mrs. Turpin's death. After gradually failing health Turpin passed away January 24, 1966, at age 79, survived by his daughter and her family. He had the distinction of being the last living member of that famous original 1910 Wright flying team. Only one other living pioneer aviator held a lower pilot license number. Mr. Turpin joined the Early Birds in 1961.

Flying Pioneer Cliff Turpin was truly one of the outstanding early airmen. He was regarded as a very safe and skillful pilot who became one of the most renowned instructors of his time. Many of his students went on to great fame, among them being Gen. T. D. Milling, U.S. Air Force, and Commander John Rodgers, U.S. Navy and others of equal distinction. Even though best known as an instructor, he also did his share of exhibition flying. History must well record his name and deeds as one of the very first who contributed a major part in the early development of American aviation history.

The name of F. Cliff Turpin appears on the Wright Memorial Plaque at Dayton along with the many others who learned to fly there.

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