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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Waite, H. Roy

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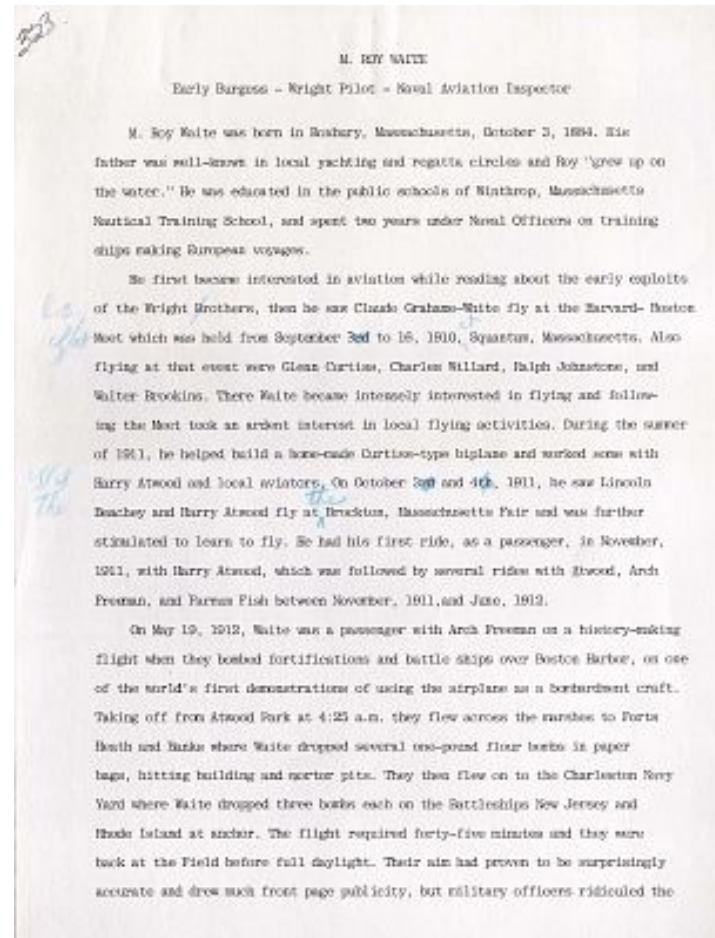
M. ROY WAITE

Early Burgess - Wright Pilot - Naval Aviation Inspector

M. Roy Waite was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts, October 3, 1884. His father was well-known in local yachting and regatta circles and Roy "grew up on the water." He was educated in the public schools of Winthrop, Massachusetts Nautical Training School, and spent two years under Naval Officers on training ships making European voyages.

He first became interested in aviation while reading about the early exploits of the Wright brothers, then he saw Claude Grahame-White fly at the Harvard-Boston Meet which was held from September 3~~rd~~ to 16, 1910, at Squantum, Massachusetts. Also flying at that event were Glenn Curtiss, Charles Willard, Ralph Johnstone, and Walter Brookins. There Waite became intensely interested in flying and following the Meet took an ardent interest in local flying activities. During the summer of 1911, he helped build a home-made Curtiss-type biplane and worked some with Harry Atwood and local aviators. On October 3~~rd~~ and 4~~th~~, 1911, he saw Lincoln Beachey and Harry Atwood fly at the Brockton, Massachusetts Fair and was further stimulated to learn to fly. He had his first ride, as a passenger, in November, 1911, with Harry Atwood, which was followed by several rides with Atwood, Arch Freeman, and Farnum Fish between November, 1911, and June, 1912.

On May 19, 1912, Waite was a passenger with Arch Freeman on a history-making flight when they bombed fortifications and battle ships over Boston Harbor, on one of the world's first demonstrations of using the airplane as a bombardment craft. Taking off from Atwood Park at 4:25 a.m. they flew across the marshes to Forts Heath and Banks where Waite dropped several one-pound flour bombs in paper bags, hitting building and mortar pits. They then flew on to the Charleston Navy Yard where Waite dropped three bombs each on the Battleships New Jersey and Rhode Island at anchor. The flight required forty-five minutes and they were back at the Field before full daylight. Their aim had proven to be surprisingly accurate and drew much front page publicity, but military officers ridiculed the



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