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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Wald, Charles

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In the spring of 1912 Wald decided to learn to fly and enrolled in the Wright Flying School at Dayton about April 1st. There he had his first flying lesson on April 12th from Instructor Al Welsh. In the same class were William Kabitsky, Grover Bergdoll, and John Klockler. Wald continued instruction through May, weather permitting, and made his first solo flight on June 27th. The next day Orville Wright rode with him on two flights as a passenger to check him out "as a graduate student." While in Dayton as a student Wald attended the funeral of Wilbur Wright as a member of the group of close personal friends. After completing instruction Wald remained at Dayton and continued to practice until July when the Wright Company decided to take him into the organization and placed him in charge of a demonstration agency at Glen Head, Long Island, using a Wright Model C on floats, with a 6-cylinder Wright engine. This branch was established to promote interest in water flying among Long Island yachtsmen. Demonstrations were arranged at various yacht clubs and passengers were carried. A hangar was built at water's edge, complete with launching ramp, and flight operations started in August with Wald as pilot-in-charge of operations. During this time he made several notable flights including one from Glen Head to New Rochelle and return on September 21st. On October 10th, while flying at Sea Cliff he saved a man from drowning. During that time he also made several basic improvements to the plane and its handling capabilities. At the close of the 1912 flying season the Wright Company abandoned the project and Wald was released.

Following this, Wald and some of his former Brooklyn Aero Club colleagues formed the Manhattan Aeroplane Company in New York. During 1913 they built two land planes and one flying boat, using Kitcham 6-cylinder engines. These planes were flight tested and proved quite successful but the project was abandoned due to a serious general slump in aviation. In 1914 Wald went with the Curtiss Company in Buffalo, New York, first in the shop working on the controls of a large tri-motored plane for the British government. He remained with the Curtiss Company through 1915 and for a time was located at the Toronto plant, where Tony Jannus gave him some instruction on Curtiss Flying Boats.

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