

A P P E N D I X 5

# PIONEER FLIGHTS TO THE FAR EAST

## LIEUTENANT GEORGES PELLETIER d'OISY (DOISY) FLIGHT: PARIS TO TOKYO – 24 APRIL TO 9 JUNE, 1924

Frenchman Lieutenant d'Oisy left Paris (Villacoublay) on 24 April, 1924. His mechanic was l'Adjudant Bernard Vesin (Besin) and their plane was an Avion Breguet XIX powered by a Lorraine 450 CV(hp) motor.

Their journey of seven weeks was a saga of adventures with an engine change at Hanoi. d'Oisy's landing was *hot* at Shanghai where he *wrote-off* his plane in a ditch. Without hesitation the Chinese loaned him another Breguet to finish his flight to Tokyo.

Their flight continued uneventfully from Shanghai through Peking, and Mukden to Pingyang (Pyong-Yang), the old capital of Korea. On 4 June, they left Pingyang at dawn and after flying about 300 miles arrived at Tai-ku (near Fu-san) in South Korea four hours later.

The next morning they started across the Korea Strait to Japan, but thick fog forced their return to Tai-ku. Sunday (8 June) they tried again, and crossed the 120 watery miles, landing at Hiroshima on the S.W. coast of Japan. Refuelling delayed them for less than an hour and they reached Osaka by 1400 hours.

They completed the final 300 miles to Tokyo the next morning. Their time from Osaka to Tokorosawa aerodrome took three hours.

Although the mishap at Shanghai deprived them of their original machine their flight was no less meritorious. They completed the final, difficult 2,300 miles to Tokyo in an older and slower machine. This they handled with the same degree of hustle that marked the earlier stages of their flight.

Lieutenant d'Oisy and Bernard Vesin had flown 11,500 miles in 46 days. Here is the log of their splendid 1924 achievement.

1924:		Miles
April 24	Paris – Bucharest	1,240
25	Bucharest – Aleppo	930

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	Miles
1924:	
26 Aleppo – Baghdad	460
27 Baghdad – Bushire	500
28 Bushire – Bandar Abbas	340
29 Bandar Abbas – Karachi	700
May 3 Karachi – Agra	700
5 Agra – Calcutta	750
9 Calcutta – Rangoon	650
10 Rangoon – Bangkok	350
11 Bangkok – Saigon	480
13 Saigon – Hanoi	750
18 Hanoi – Canton	500
20 Canton – Shanghai	800
29 Shanghai – Peking	700
June 2 Peking – Mukden	400
3 Mukden – Pingyang (Korea)	230
4 Pingyang – Tai-ku (Korea)	300
8 Tai-ku – Osaka (Japan) via Hiroshima	425
9 Osaka – Tokorosawa (Tokyo)	295
	TOTAL 11,500

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China, in 1923, bought 70 aeroplanes designated Breguet 14/400 and powered by the 400hp 12Da Lorraine-Dietrich. The type played a part in many internal wars in China in the inter-war years.

In 1926, Capitaine d'Oisy made another flight to the Far East. On 11 June, again flying an Avion Breguet XIX, he left Paris. Just seven days later, on 18 June, he arrived in Peking. He had covered 6,306 miles in 63 hours 30 minutes flying time! An extraordinary achievement!

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In the following years France's aerial hero was rarely out of the news. Born on March 9, 1892, Gunural de Brigade, Commaneur de la Lugion d'Honneur, Georges Pelletier d'Oisy died on May 15, 1953.

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### THE AMERICAN ROUND-THE-WORLD FLIERS – 1924.

On March 17, 1924, four Douglas World Cruisers flew out of Santa Monica, California. They were on the first stage of their attempt on the round-the-world record and under the leadership of Major Frederick L. Martin. Their successful trip took 175 days and covered 27,534 miles (44,312km). It included 15 days, 11 hours and 7 minutes of flying time. Just two of the original planes arrived back in Seattle. The date was September 28 and the US Army Air Service had completed the first circumnavigation of the world.

The Douglas World Cruiser was a specially designed, two-seater, dual-controlled biplane to operate from both land and water. A single 400hp, 12-cylinder Liberty engine produced a top speed of 103mph (166km/h). Range of the DWC (the service designation) was 2,200 miles (3,550km) as a land plane and 1,650 miles (2,660km) when fitted with floats. Donald Wills Douglas built five DWCs, four for the flight and one as the back-up aircraft.

## AIRPORT OF THE NINE DRAGONS, KAI TAK, KOWLOON

Major Martin and his mechanic, Staff Sergeant Alva Harvey, crewed *Seattle*, the number one aircraft. Lieutenant Lowell H. Smith and Sergeant Arthur Turner drew *Chicago*, with *Boston* going to Lieutenant Leigh Wade and Sergeant Henry Ogden and Lieutenants Erik H. Nelson and John Harding getting *New Orleans*. Lieutenants Leslie P. Arnold and LeClaire Schultze were the reserve pilots. When Sergeant Turner reported sick Lieutenant Arnold replaced him.

Their route was Seattle-Japan-India-Europe-Iceland-Greenland-Seattle. From a comfortable chair that looked less than formidable. Yet with most paper plans it was to prove an illusion. Ahead were 57 *hops* with the expectation of foul weather, crashes, and high drama.

The trip got off to a good start but trouble was just ahead. At Prince Rupert, British Columbia, Major Martin landed the *Seattle* in shallow water and damaged a float. Repairs would take time so Martin ordered the other three crews to continue to the next scheduled stop. With repairs completed bad weather prevented his departure until 25 April. While enroute to Dutch Harbour, Martin encountered heavy fog and flew into a mountain top. The crash demolished the *Seattle* but the men survived. Meanwhile, at Dutch Harbour the weather prevented the others from mounting a search. Ten days later Martin and Harvey trudged out of the wilderness to civilisation.

Major Martin then made a hard decision. He could have waited for the spare DWC but figured that the delay might give another nation the chance to become first round-the-world. Martin ordered the flight to proceed and appointed Lieutenant Smith to assume command.

The flight did continue, across two oceans, jungles and deserts. The remaining DWCs battled fog and drifting icebergs. The planes' small glass windshields were about six inches high and 18 inches in width and gave little protection from the slipstream and freezing rain. They screeched through passes of unmarked mountain peaks. Malaria-carrying mosquitoes spoiled their rest. There were no weather forecasts and mechanical problems were never far away.

By June 2 they had reached Kagoshima, Japan, where 50,000 flag-waving Japanese gave them an enthusiastic welcome. Just after midday, on June 8, they flew through Lei Yue Mun Pass and touched down in Kowloon Harbour, Hong Kong.

Leslie Arnold tells a humorous story when his engine overheated. "We landed in a river in Indochina, the other boys landed alongside. A cracked cylinder meant we had to get a new engine, so the others took off for Tourane, our closest spares pool. Lowell Smith and I stayed in the airplane sleeping on the wings. Days passed, until one night the Swedish accent of Erik Nelson wafted down the river. He arrived with a fleet of sampans that took us in tow. With the rising sun I could see the headman sitting beneath a parasol, surrounded by cushions, being fanned by his favourite wives. This gave me much to think about! Was I living in the wrong country? Several days later we arrived at the Standard Oil wharf in the capital of the French Province of Annam."

On the homeward-bound leg *Boston's* engine seized. Wade and Ogden successfully ditched in the Atlantic. They were picked up and taken to join the other two DWCs waiting at Newfoundland. The back-up plane at Seattle became *Boston II* and flown to Newfoundland for Wade and Ogden to complete the flight.

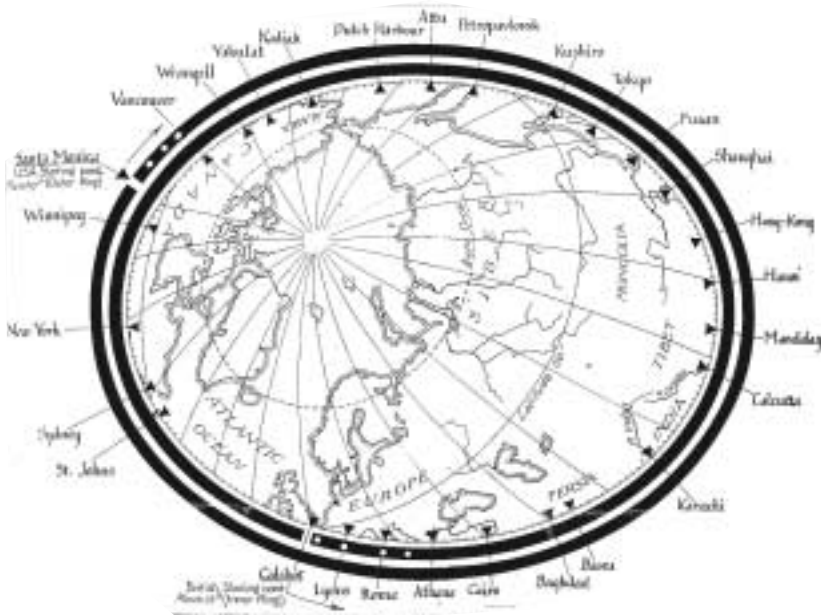
They returned to a heroes' welcome. President Calvin Coolidge praised their achievement and all America revelled in the glory of being the first around the world.

Here is a summary of the great flight. Total elapsed time 175 days; mileage 27,534; days actually in the air 66; actual flying time 351 hours 11 minutes; average speed 76.26 mph.

Today *Chicago* is in the National Air and Space Museum, Washington, and *New Orleans* in the USAF Museum, Ohio. But Major Frederick Martin's role in that great adventure has slipped from memory.

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Major Martin rose to the rank of major-general but was fated to end his career under a less than silver-lined cloud. He commanded Hickham Field, Hawaii on that fateful Sunday morning of December 7, 1941. General Martin was criticised for not dispersing his aircraft to minimise the damage of that sneak attack. Frederick Martin again faded into obscurity and died in 1954 at the age of 72.



The above chart, published in *Flight* magazine of April 3, 1924, permitted the reader to plot the weekly progress of the American and British round-the-world flights. The Americans flew clockwise (i.e. east to west), and the Vickers *Vulture* anti-clockwise.



*Major Frederick L. Martin, leader of the flight.*

(Photo: US Air Force Central Museum, Ohio)

### THE AMERICAN ROUND-THE-WORLD FLIGHT – 1924 MARCH 17 – SEPTEMBER 28



*Lieutenant Leslie P. Arnold during the world flight.*

(Photo: US Air Force Central Museum, Ohio)



*The Douglas World Cruisers prepare for the Atlantic Ocean crossing. In the foreground is New Orleans, piloted by Lts Harding and Nelson. It is preserved at the US Air Force Central Museum, Ohio. (Photo: US Air Force Central Museum, Ohio)*

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## THE BRITISH WORLD FLIGHT ATTEMPT – 1924

With little fanfare three British aviators left Calshot, Tuesday, March 25. The Vickers-Napier Vulture amphibian biplane slid down the slipway, headed towards Southampton while taking off, circled back over Calshot, and quickly disappeared in the distance. The British round-the-world flight had opened – it was just after noon.

“We have failed, but we did our best.

We were beaten in the end by fog.”

With these words Squadron Leader Archibald Stuart Charles S. MacLaren, OBE, MC, DFC, AFC, concluded his narrative of the British failure to fly around the world.

Squadron Leader MacLaren had begun with congratulations to the successful American airmen. Then a tribute to gallant Flying Officer William Noble Plenderleith, who piloted the plane, and Flight Sergeant R. Andrews, his engineer. The distinguished audience at the Hotel Cecil heard this exciting account of the flight.

“Soon after leaving the English coast we found fog waiting for us in the Channel. It forced us lower and lower. By a hair’s breadth we avoided colliding with the French cliffs near Havre. This was a bad start but the weather worsened across France and Italy. While crossing the Apennines in dense rain-laden clouds and failing light a small gap appeared in the clouds below us. We found ourselves in a small valley with a railway line that we followed to Brindisi. I still ponder what would have happened if a tunnel . . .

“Our next incident occurred en route to Corfu. We had just completed the sea crossing from Italy, when our engine gave a tremendous backfire, severely vibrated, and then seized. Plenderleith lowered the nose and as we broke through cloud we found ourselves over a large lake – the only possible landing place for miles. The Greek Navy hauled our machine out of the lake, got us into the sea then towed us to Corfu. The ratings from the British battleship the *Emperor of India* installed a spare Napier engine and we arrived at Cairo by moonlight.

"We made good time to Baghdad, albeit losing sight of the desert track for an anxious half-hour. All went well from Baghdad to Karachi, then our tribulations returned. Another seized engine forced our landing in the scorching Sind desert near the village of Parlu. The Royal Air Force dispatched another engine from Baghdad.

"Little happened until we reached Akyab, but the 17 days lost in the Sind meant we hit a furious monsoon. For three days our plane was soaked by torrential rain. Our plane was sluggish on take-off, we just cleared the boundary trees, but Plenderleith could not keep us airborne – we struck the water. This severely damaged our hull and we started to sink. A boat towed us to a beach.

"The damage proved beyond repair. Shrugging off our disappointment we cabled home for our spare plane waiting at Tokyo. The American Navy wasted little time in bringing our replacement Vulture.

"The delay at Akyab had not improved the weather across the Arakan Yoma (mountains) to Rangoon. After leaving Rangoon for Bangkok impenetrable, towering cumuli clouds prevented us crossing that vast range of mountains. We were finally forced to abandon our attempt and land at Tavoy on the southern Burma coast. The next day we managed to make a nervous crossing to land in the Bangkok River.

"The mountain range between Siam and Indo-China provided more anxiety. As we approached the mass of sinister black clouds blanketing the range Plenderleith couldn't out climb them. By this time, we had all got the wind up, and backtracked to find some opening in the clouds. We found a hole and sighted a clearing in the middle of the jungle. We decided to land and wait for an improvement in the weather. As we approached we disturbed a herd of elephants that rushed trumpeting into the trees. The lower we came the longer grew the grass until in horror we realised our clearing was a vast swamp. With no alternative Plenderleith climbed back into the clouds until blue sky appeared above. After an hour we saw the distant sea. The three of us solemnly shook hands on that splendid sight.

"Our flight to Hong Kong, Shanghai, across the China Sea, to Tokyo was a pleasant experience. The Japanese people treated us as royalty. We left Tokyo with a passenger, Colonel Broome, and almost immediately our nemesis had returned – fog! We made three forced landings during that first day's flight yet we reached Yetorup, the first of the Kurile Islands, landing safely in a large lake.

"Dense fog delayed us a day, and when we finally got off we met more fog and storms. We had to turn back and land in a small open bay on Tokotan, another of the Kurile Islands. Our anchors didn't hold, and it was with the utmost difficulty that we prevented the machine from being dashed on the beach. Plenderleith nursed the machine out to sea, got her airborne and landed in a small lake just inland. The machine weathered a most unpleasant night, but it was nothing to the dense fog, rain, and gales of the next two days. On the third day a Japanese destroyer found us and radioed the world of our safety. We resumed our journey seven days after landing at Tokotan.

"The passage along the Kuriles was an anxious one. Plenderleith battled dense fog all the way to Petropavlovsk in Kamchatka. There our gallant little supply ship *Thiepval* waited patiently for us.

"Now I come to the last day of our flight, 2 August. We left Oest Kamchatka facing 130 miles of angry sea. Within minutes thick fog forced us to within 50 feet of the ocean. As we neared the coast the fog forced us even lower until we flew between the ocean swells. Without warning black cliffs of a small inlet loomed ahead – Plenderleith swerved just in time. We were now in a state of nervous prostration and decided to land in the open sea. Plenderleith made a perfect landing in that murderous sea but while taxiing a huge wave smashed our port float to kindling and buried the wing's tip in the water. The machine

swung suddenly dipping the starboard wing that tore off that float and part of the wing-tip. We were now hopelessly lost but Plenderleith kept us moving on a northerly bearing towards Bering Island. Meanwhile Broome and I ran up and down the wing trying to balance the machine. After three hours of this the fog suddenly lifted and we saw the coastline about half a mile ahead. With the machine breaking-up we anchored just off the surf line, jumped into the icy water, and struggled to the beach. We were only a mile or two from Nikolski. The *Thiepval* salvaged the remains of our machine the next morning."

A bitterly disappointed Squadron Leader MacLaren retained a semblance of humour – never again would he criticise the London *pea-soupers* – they were child's play!



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### MAJOR PEDRO ZANNI – 1924

The Argentine Air Service chose Major Zanni, Lieutenant Page Nelson and Chief Engineer F. Beltrame, for its aerial round-the-world dash. The only difference to the route followed by Squadron-Leader MacLaren's British team was the starting and finishing points – Amsterdam.

Under the guidance of Mijneer Anthony Fokker, the famous aeroplane designer, they settled on Fokker C.1V machines powered by British Napier Lion engines. They would use a land type for the first stage to Tokyo, a float type for the Pacific crossing, and a specially constructed Fokker-Napier mono-seaplane for the Atlantic hop.

The morning of July 26, 1924, Lieutenant Page Nelson (navigator) became seriously ill. Major Zanni decided to proceed without him, and by 0630 hours Zanni and Beltrame had set course over Amsterdam. They arrived at Le Bourget at 1500 hours following a technical landing at Le Cateau.

They departed from Paris at 1056 hours the following morning, arriving at Lyons at 1345 hours. Monday, 28 July, found them *en route* to Rome.

On July 30, they landed in Constantinople, and after an hour's stop flew on to Aleppo. They were in Baghdad early the next day, and continued on to Basra. By August 1, they had reached Bandar Abbas, and by the fifth had reached Naserabad after landing at Karachi. With buoyant spirits they realised they had covered 5,500 miles in 11 days.

Allahabad was their next stop arriving in the early afternoon of 6 August. At Allahabad their luck deserted them! During the night torrential rain made the airfield a quagmire. The following morning's take-off ended when the wheels sank into the mud smashing the propeller. They found a replacement propeller but the delay prevented them leaving for Calcutta until late in the morning.

A crowd of officials and spectators awaited their arrival at Dumdum Aerodrome. They waited in vain! Neither men, machine, nor news of their whereabouts reached the aerodrome

and the well-wishers dispersed. On the following morning (August 8), the Fokker turned up at Calcutta. Zanni stated he made a forced landing near Isri (Bikar), 200 miles or so from Calcutta. Thick fog was the culprit. He saw little future in dodging trees and water-buffaloes just above the ground and landed in an open space. They tried to sleep in their machine but a large crowd of Indians touching and shaking their Fokker kept them awake.

At Calcutta they fitted a new propeller. Beltrame also made a thorough check of the engine – it showed signs of rough running. This was the probable result of the propeller striking the ground at Allahabad. Not until Thursday, August 14, did they get out of Calcutta, flying direct to Akyab and then to Rangoon where they landed in late afternoon. Zanni reported the flight from Akyab was a nightmare of heavy rain and severe turbulence.

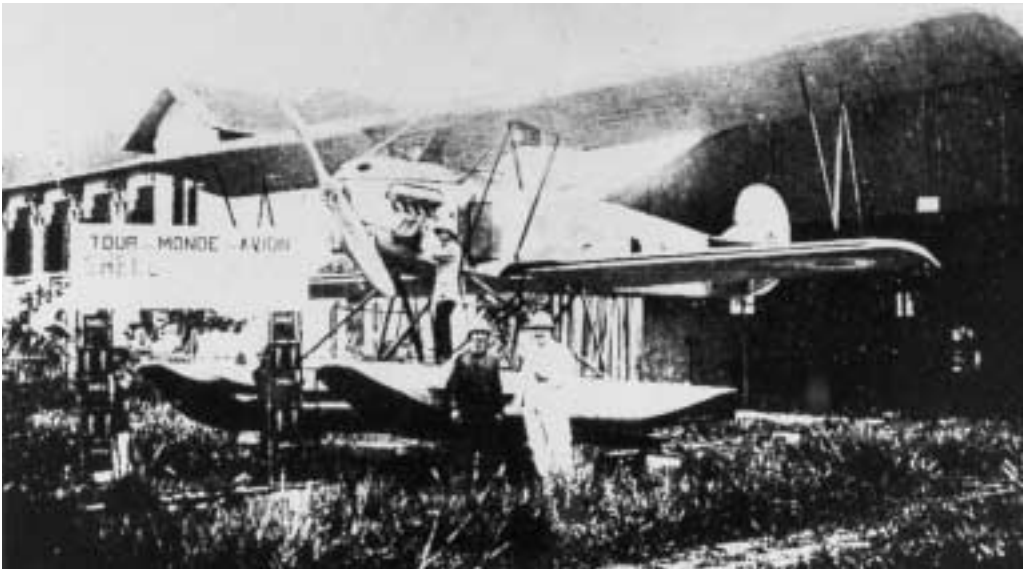
More trouble came to the Argentine airmen on take-off from Hanoi. With rain saturating the field their Fokker overturned and suffered extensive damage. The men escaped injury.

Major Zanni cabled Hong Kong for their replacement Fokker float-plane. The S.S. *President Madison* had positioned it some weeks beforehand. The Japanese steamer *Chukwa Maru* brought it to Haiphong.

They left Hanoi August 22, landing in Kowloon Harbour the next day. The Chinese authorities withheld ongoing clearance as the country was in the grip of internal strife. Their permission to fly to Shanghai came on 27 September. At Foochow, adverse weather grounded them for several days, until, on October 1, they landed in Shanghai. They had covered the 500 miles from Foochow in five hours.

Zanni and Beltrame left Shanghai on October 9 for the Japanese city of Kagoshima. The following day they flew the 300 miles to Kushimoto in good time. On the 10th they landed at the Kasumigaura naval air station, near Tokyo. There, Major Zanni ended the flight because of the lateness of the season.

Major Zanni and Chief Engineer Beltrame had taken 19 flying days for their Amsterdam-Tokyo flight – one day less than Pelletier d'Oisy's Paris-Tokyo flight. They flew the first 7,500 miles (Amsterdam-Hanoi) in 17 flying days, with one Napier Lion engine.



HAIPHONG – 21 AUGUST, 1924

Major Zanni's Fokker C.IV being refuelled by Shell-Mex. This was the standby plane (float version) brought by the Japanese steamer *Chukwa Maru* from Hong Kong.

(Photo: Courtesy Royal Air Force Museum)



## THE SPANISH RAID – MADRID TO MANILA – 1926

PILOTS: Captains;

RAFAEL MARTINEZ ESTEVE

EDUARDO GONZALEZ GALLARZA (1899-1986)

JOAQUIN LORINGA (TABOADA) (1895-1927)

MECHANICS:

JOAQUIN AROZAMEN

PEDRO MARIANO CALVO

EUGENIO PEREZ

The great Spanish *raid* from Madrid to Manila germinated in the minds of Jose Carillo, Eduardo Gallarza and Joaquin Loringa in June 1924. This followed a successful delivery flight from Paris to Madrid in a *Potez XV* plane. The dream ended for Jose *Pepe* Carillo when, in October, he died fighting Moroccan rebels.

The motives for the flight paralleled those of other aerial-minded nations – prestige, emotion and sentiment. The loss of the Philippines, then under American control, had ended Spain's Colonial Empire. This flight would rejoin the two like-speaking countries and show the advances made by Spanish fliers. The 94,000 pesetas cost of the flight was an investment in a future passenger service.

The planned flight was 20 stages over 30 calendar days. The Spanish Air Force meteorologists set a starting frame before 25 March and not later than 15 April, the desert heat and the typhoons that spawned in the China Sea the deciding factors.

The plane chosen was the Breguet X1X A2 powered by the double V 12-cylinder Elizade A4 Lorraine Dietrich that developed 450 hp. The longest stage was between Cairo and Baghdad. They increased the Breguet's fuel capacity for this 1400 km sector.

At 0815 hours on 5 April, 1926, three Breguet X1Xs of the Elcano Squadron took off in perfect formation from Madrid. At an altitude of 1500m they passed between Alicante and Cartagena. They arrived at Argel (Maison Blanche) just under five hours and 900 km later.

On the second day low cloud and unexpected headwinds separated the formation. Martinez Esteve followed the coastline at a minimum height dodging trees and rugged outcrops. A check on his fuel showed he could not make Tripoli so he diverted to Tunis. Then a rough running engine forced him to land at Garros. The problem taxed Calvo's ability and he took hours to rectify the fault.

Esteve made every effort to catch up but when Gallarza and Loriga landed in Cairo on April 8, Esteve trailed them by a day. They extended their stay in Cairo to allow Esteve and Calvo to rest and check their plane.

The sector from El Cairo to Baghdad was the most difficult. On the 11th the three Breguets climbed to 3,000m and logged abeam of Port Said. Mount Sinai, protruding from a sea of blue haze, floated by to starboard. Gaza slipped by and they crossed into Palestine passing the spires of sacred Jerusalem with the Dead Sea off their starboard beam. Ahead was the Trans-Jordan city of Amman and beyond – the forbidding Syrian Desert.

Gallarza's engine then lost power and he fell behind and forced landed 60 km from Amman. The dust-laden air then caused Esteve's engine to over-heat and he landed at a British emergency field. Loriga circled as Esteve lost altitude and safely landed. He then continued on to Baghdad, only relaxing when the Euphrates River appeared out of the haze. There was no news of Gallarza or Esteve. Some hours later Gallarza's plane screamed out of the fading light and parked beside Loriga's plane.

Esteve and Calvo's *raid* on Manila ended in the sands of the desert. Esteve later wrote *Una Aventura En el Desierto – An Adventure In the Desert* – it enjoyed instant success. He told of Calvo finding the cause of the failure within minutes of landing. Sand particles had blocked the fuel line. This proved easy to fix, but a check of the carburettor found a collapsed float.

They built a smoke fire but could not attract several planes that flew overhead. Esteve decided they should walk towards a Bedouin caravan he had seen snaking its way through

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the dunes just before he landed. They could not find it! Within two hours of leaving an RAF patrol found their abandoned plane.

By the 14th they were ravenously hungry with little water. When Calvo, now weak and delirious, dropped off to sleep Esteve went exploring and got lost. The next afternoon a British patrol passed less than 50 yards away yet Esteve was too weak to attract their attention.

The RAF 47th Squadron found Calvo on the 17th and shortly thereafter Esteve. They had survived in the desert with little food and water for seven days.

Then Madrid instructed Esteve to abandon their flight. Their delay had brought them into the China Sea typhoon season. With the others already in Calcutta this was a wise decision.

Gallarza and Loriga left Calcutta on 18 April, staging through Rangoon, Bangkok and Saigon. They made a refuel stop at Vink and landed at Hanoi late on the 26th.

On May 1, they left Hanoi for Macau. Loriga landed at Macau on a tree-enclosed football field with a seized engine. Gallarza, following him, landed too fast and finished in the branches of a tree. The Macanese gave the Spanish airmen unfettered use of their workshops but their engineers lacked aeronautical experience. Two British aircraft fitters, sent from Hong Kong, winched Gallarza's plane from the tree and repaired the bent airframe. They could do little with Loriga's useless engine.

A single Breguet XIX commanded by Gallarza, with Loriga his observer, left Macau on 11 May. They landed in Manila two days later.

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**FLIGHT LOG: MADRID – MANILA 1926**

1926	TRIP	Distance (km)	Flying hr min	Average Speed (km/h)
5 March	Cuatro Vientos – Argel	900	4 40	192.9
6	Argel – Tripoli	1300	7 00	185.7
7	Tripoli – Bengasi	950	6 00	158.3
8	Bengasi – El Cairo	1150	7 40	150.0
	<b>Sub-Total 1</b>	<b>4300</b>	<b>25 20</b>	<b>169.7</b>
11	El Cairo – Bagdad	1400	8 10	171.4
13	Bagdad – Bushire	900	4 30	200.0
13	Bushire – Bander Abbas	600	3 00	200.0
14	Bander Abbas – Karachi	1250	7 30	166.7
	<b>Sub-Total 2</b>	<b>8450</b>	<b>48 30</b>	<b>174.2</b>
16	Karachi – Agra	1250	6 50	182.9
18	Agra – Calcutta	1300	7 00	185.7
21	Calcutta – Rangoon	1200	7 30	160.0
22	Rangoon – Bangkok	700	4 00	175.0
22	Bangkok – Saigon	750	5 00	150.0
	<b>Sub-Total 3</b>	<b>13650</b>	<b>78 50</b>	<b>173.1</b>
26	Saigon – Vink	1000		
26	Vink – Hanoi	300	10 35	122.8
1 May	Hanoi – Macau	850	6 55	122.9
11	Macau – Aparri	900	6 55	130.1
13	Aparri – Manila	400	3 00	133.3
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>17100</b>	<b>106 15</b>	<b>161.1</b>

## THE PRIDE OF DETROIT – SCHLEE & BROCK – 1927.

It was in 1926 that Eddie Stinson's company built the SB-1 *Detroit*. In April 1927 the new SM-1 emerged. Like the original version it was a large high-wing monoplane offering 400lb (188kg) more payload than its predecessor. Stinson retained the 220hp Wright Whirlwind J-5 engine. The Wayco Air Service, owned by Schlee, bought the first aircraft and named it *Pride of Detroit*.

Edward *Ed* Schlee was also the President of the Wayco Oil Corporation, and could fly a plane. His pilot was William *Billy* Brock, who learned to fly at the age of 16 years. Brock had honed his skills flying the U.S. air mail and was held in high regard by his peers.

On August 22, 1927, the *Pride of Detroit* set course from Detroit's Ford Airport on a planned 15-day round-the-world flight. The two Americans crossed the Atlantic from Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, to London in 23 hours 19 minutes arriving at 1033 hours Sunday, August 28, having covered 2,850 miles. A Plymouth observer sighted a yellow monoplane overhead about 0700 hours, but the airmen didn't know of this. They did see land but thought it was Ireland. Their maps were crude and this placed them at a disadvantage identifying the terrain of a strange country. They circled for a long time and then flew along the Devon coast to Seaton, where they dropped messages asking for the name of the town and country. A large Union Jack spread out on the ground answered for the country, but they couldn't read the scrawled name. They carried on and finally recognised landmarks that brought them to Croydon. With no news since their Plymouth sighting the authorities thought they had continued on to the Continent. A mere 50 people applauded their splendid deed.

At Croydon they told an exciting story of their crossing. In mid-Atlantic a storm had raged that Billy Brock described as appalling. At times they operated between 200 and 10,000 feet until the freezing cold forced them down to be again battered by turbulence. As the sun set they ran into a sinister line of thick cloud and when dawn broke they were still in it. They sighted two ships during the crossing, and during a brief thinning of the cloud they thought they glimpsed the Fastnet Rock Light.

Not discouraged they left Croydon for Munich the next morning and landed there at 1559 hours the same day. They reached Belgrade at noon on August 30. Their flight continued across the sub-continent of India until they landed at Kai Tak, Hong Kong.

Schlee and Brock eventually arrived in Tokyo 18 days after leaving Newfoundland. They shipped their plane from Yokohama to the States. Again taking to the skies over San Francisco the *Pride of Detroit* touched down at Detroit's Ford Airfield after six weeks of high adventure.



THE PRIDE OF DETROIT

*The Stinson SB-1 Detroit at Hong Kong on September 9, 1927.*

(Photo: Fred Lillywhite)

## THE RAF's FAR EAST FLIGHT – 1927-1928

A year before this great saga began two flying boats skipped off the waters of Plymouth. They were Supermarine Mk 1 Southamptons commanded by Squadron Leader Gerry E Livock, DFC, AFC. His mission was to fly to Aboukir, Egypt and Cyprus and return to England within 29 days, a distance of 11,265km (7,000 miles). This, the RAF's first true long-range flight into foreign waters, was successful and paved the way for the more ambitious project soon to be.

The Mk I had a hull constructed of wood. Its disadvantage was that it could soak up 180kg (400lb) of sea water, which created problems in handling. The Mk II, fitted with a corrosion-resistant duralumin hull, offered a structure 245kg (540lb) lighter than its predecessor, and no soakage penalties. With twin 502hp Napier Lion V engines providing the power the Southampton had a maximum range of 1,500km (930 miles). The type made many notable long-distance flights; the most famous was the one that follows.

On October 14, 1927, four Southampton 11's left Felixstowe to fly to Plymouth. Named the *Far East Flight*, its commander was Group Captain H. M. Cave-Brown-Cave, DSO, DFC. His co-pilot was Flying Officer S. D. Scott. The Group Captain's second-in-command was Squadron Leader Gerry Livock, DFC, AFC, whose assistant was Flight Lieutenant H. G. Sawyer. The two other boat captains were Flight Lieutenant Andrew Carnegie, AFC, helped by Flight Lieutenant P. E. Maitland, and Flight Lieutenant C. C. Wigglesworth supported by Flying Officer G. E. Nicholetts.

Cave-Brown-Cave's mandate was to open an air route to Australia and the Far East. They were to assess routes and select landing sites for flying-boat operation, independent of established bases, and record the Southampton's performances under different climatic conditions. Then the opportunity of *showing the Union Jack* in countries previously unvisited or unexplored was too good to ignore. The preparations for such an extended cruise took almost a year.

Three days later all four took-off from Plymouth Sound and, in formation, smoothly rolled on to the first leg of their cruise to Singapore. This was the first time a RAF flying-boat had attempted such a lengthy flight. A flight that covered vast stretches of sea and land unfamiliar to the men. With their splashdown at Singapore's Seletar, on 28 February 1928, each plane had behaved splendidly.

On 21 May they commenced a tour of Australia, returning to Singapore on 13 September. On 1 November, with a substitute Southampton, the Far East Flight crowned their success with a tour of South-East Asia. They landed at Kuching, Labuan, Puerto Princesa and Manila. From Salamague, near the northern tip of Luzon, they set a westerly course across the restless China Sea, and buoyed in Kowloon Bay on November 18, 1928. After a week's rest they returned to the Lion City through Tourane, Coconut Bay, Bangkok, Victoria Point and Penang. When their great adventure concluded at Singapore on December 11, 1928, they had completed 5,340 miles in 41 days.

The *Daily News* applauded it *the greatest flight in history* – a fitting description of an outstanding feat of navigation and endurance that remains the Southampton's most celebrated triumph. At Seletar the Southamptons become the initial equipment of the reformed No. 205 Squadron. On January 8, 1929, Squadron Leader G. E. Gerry Livock, DFC, AFC, became the unit's first commander.



**SUPERMARINE MK II SOUTHAMPTON FLYING BOAT**

Arrived in Hong Kong November 18, 1928. At RAF Station Seletar, Singapore, receiving the final overhaul for the Australian segment of the Far East Flight. Departure date May 21, 1928.

(Photo: Royal Air Force Museum)

\* \* \*

**MARGA von ETZDORF**

The stately Fraulein Marga von Etzdorf was the tragedienne of German aviation. Marga was born into a famous Berlin Army family on August 1, 1907. She was among the greatest sports flyers that Germany produced in the late twenties and early thirties. In the smallest planes she *raided* the world's distant skies. Blessed with exceptional courage her career was a spate of accidents.

On August 29, 1931, she flew her Junkers Junior, affectionately called *Kiek in die Welt* (Jump into the World), equipped with a 80 hp Genet-Motor, from Berlin to Tokyo (Haneda). Her track took her to Constantinople, the Canary Islands and to Tokyo. Against advice she took off into the teeth of a threatening storm that worsened as she crossed the Mediterranean from the African Coast to Sicily. At Sicily she hit a wall on the aerodrome and badly damaged her plane.

In April 1932, she landed at Kai Tak en route Japan to Surabaya. At an intermediate landing she suffered extensive injury. Her beloved Junior was a write-off.



*Fraulein Marga von Etzdorf – 1931.*

(Photo: Courtesy Deutsches Museum, Munich)

On 27 May, 1933, she left Berlin in a Klemm KL32 plane bound for Australia. She seriously damaged her plane on landing near Aleppo in Syria.

This, her third major accident, preyed on her mind. She told friends that her head was a mass of pain and decided to make an early night. Turning on the stairs she said it would be a relief if she would not wake again! That night she ended her life.

Fraulein Marga von Etdorf's writing leaves a splendid picture. She describes the wonderful art of flying and her opinion of the planes she handled.

She was awarded the Golden Service Medal of the Kaiser Japanese Aero Clubs. An honour given to few!

Her name is inscribed on the Aero Club of Deutschland's Golden Roll of Honour. She is in splendid company – Elly Beinhorn, Kohl von Hunefeld, Eckener and von Koenig-Warhausen – other famous flyers.

\* \* \*

### THE FLYING HONEYMOONERS – Mr & Mrs C. H. DAY

The round-the-world honeymooners came from Ridgewood, New Jersey, USA. In a biplane, designed by the groom, they left Heston on 30 May, 1931. They planned to visit Paris, Brussels, Berlin, Constantinople, Palestine, Iraq, India and China. From Shanghai they intended to ship their plane home across the Pacific. In early October they arrived in Hong Kong and left on the 9th – next stop Amoy.

\* \* \*

### CAPTAIN FERNANDO REIN LORING Spanish Pioneer Aviator

Birth: September 9, 1902.

Death: June 24, 1978. (76 years).

#### First *Raid* (flight) Madrid-Manila – April – July 1932

For his first *raid* – Madrid to Manila – Fernando Rein Loring chose a plane built by his Uncle Jorge. This was a Loring E-II designed by the Spanish engineer Eduardo Barron. A Kinner K5 of 100 CV (hp) with five cylinders powered the tiny craft. Carrying the registration EC-ASA and the nickname *la Pepa*, he left his uncle's aerodrome, Cuatro Vientos, at 0600 hours on 25 April, 1932.

The flight experienced few untoward problems until he arrived in Hong Kong on 31 May. Throughout June a strong southerly wind swept the South China Sea, preventing Loring from completing the final segment of his flight.

The meteorologists' forecasts were not encouraging and he sought permission from the Japanese authorities on Formosa for permission to make an intermediate stop there.

Several weeks elapsed before the Japanese granted their permission. Almost simultaneously the southerly winds abated.

In early July he left Hong Kong on the final segment of his flight. The trip lacked problems and he landed in Manila after a refuelling stop at Aparri, on the northern point of Luzon Island.

#### The flight's log

Route:	Kilometres
Madrid – Malaga	420
Malaga – Argel (Algiers), 750km and Argel – Tunes (Tunis), 650km	1400
Tunis – Tripoli, 650km and Tripoli-Benghazi 850km	1500

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Benghazi – Cairo, 1120km, and Cairo-Gaza, 350km	1470
Gaza – Baghdad	960
Baghdad – Bushire (Bushehr), 800km and	
Bushire – Lingeh (Bandar-e Lengeh), 500km	1300
Lingeh – Jask, 380km and Jask – Karachi 960km	1340
Karachi – Jodhpur, 620km and Jodhpur – Allahabad, 880km	1500
Allahabad – Calcutta, 740km and Calcutta – Akyab, 650km	1390
Akyab – Rangoon, 520km and Rangoon – Bangkok, 640km	1160
Bangkok – Hanoi	975
Hanoi – Hong Kong	900
Hong Kong – Aparri 900km, and Aparri – Manila, 400km	1300
<b>Total Distance</b>	<b>15,615</b>

\* \* \*

### Second Raid (flight) Madrid-Manila – 18 March-10 April, 1933

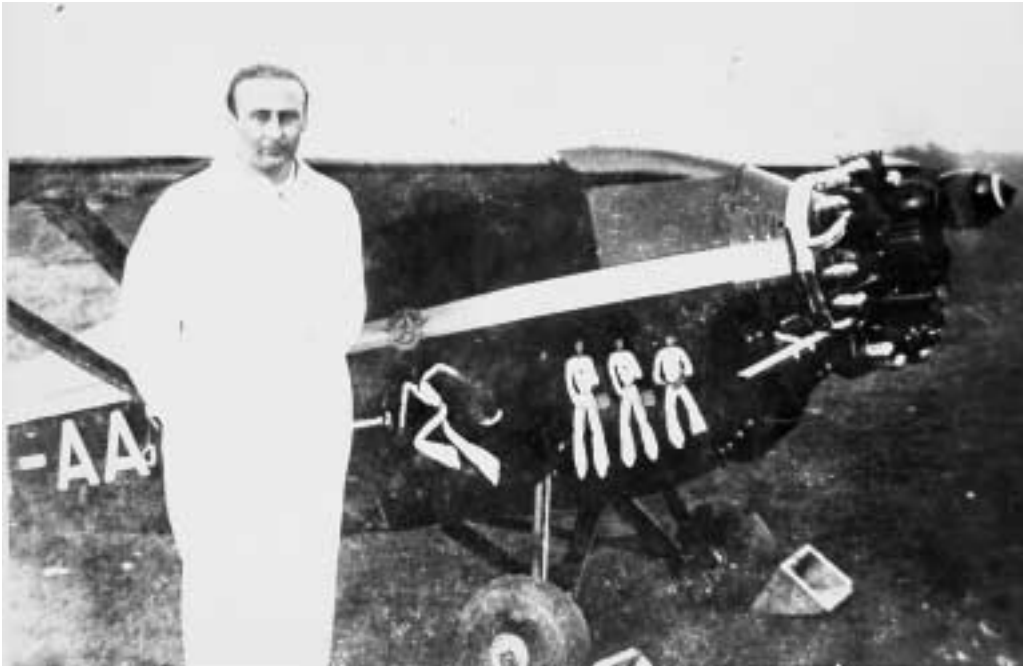
Loring continued his preference for small single-seater planes. This time he settled on a British Swift built by Nick Comper and powered by a Pobjoy 90hp engine. He baptised his Swift *Ciudad de Manila*. The *City of Manila* carried the Spanish registration EC-AAT.

For twelve days of flying he pressed his tiny plane and his *City of Manila* responded. The 90hp Pobjoy didn't miss a beat. The following log shows her reliability.

Date	Route	Distance	Time
1933	km	km	hr min
18 March	Madrid-Tunis	1,460	7.30
19	Tunis-Benghazi	1,510	8.15
20	Benghazi-Cairo	1,100	5.15
21	Cairo-Baghdad	1,250	7.15
22	Baghdad-Bushire	800	4.00
24	Bushire-Jask-Jodhpur	2,400	12.00
25	Jodhpur-Calcutta	1,620	8.30
26	Calcutta-Rangoon	1,170	6.00
27	Rangoon-Lhankon (Thekek)	1,250	10.00
7 April	Lhankon-Hanoi	450	2.30
8	Hanoi-Hong Kong	850	5.00
10	Hong Kong-Manila	1,140	6.25
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15,000km</b>	<b>82.40</b>

### Comparison of his two planes:

Dimension	Loring E-II	Comper Swift
Wing	12.50 m	7.32 m
Length	8.10 m	5.39 m
Height	2.80 m	-
Empty Weight	500 kg	280 kg
AUW	910 kg	531 kg
Engine	Kinner K.5 5 cylinder 100 hp	Pobjoy R Radial 7 cylinder 90 hp.
Maximum Speed	185 km/h	210 km/h
Cruise Speed	150 km/h	193 km/h
Radio Range	1,300 km	1,600 km



CAPTAIN FERNANDO REIN LORING:

*2nd Raid (flight) Madrid-Manila – 18 March-10 April, 1933. Posing with the British Comper Swift – the City of Manila – EC-AAT.*

(Photo: Felipe E. Ezquerro)

## WOLFGANG von GRONAU

In an aviation career of outstanding achievements von Gronau's greatest adventure occurred in 1932. In four months, beginning on 22 July, his world flight covered 44,000km. He tracked to Iceland, Greenland, Canada, USA, Alaska, Aleutians, Japan and Shanghai. On 27 September he arrived in Hong Kong just before noon. He returned to List auf Silt on 9 November having visited Indonesia, Rangoon, Ceylon, Karachi, Baghdad, Athens, and Rome.

The plane that gave him the victory was the one that Roald Amundsen flew to the North Pole. The Dornier – Gronland -*Wal* (Whale) carried the registration D-1422. Von Gronau had a splendid crew; Funker Albrecht (radio), Flugzeugfuhrer Zimmer (co-pilot) and Bordmonteur Hack (mechanic).

Wolfgang was born in Berlin on 25 February, 1893. He grew up in East Prussia, Insterburg and Konigsberg. His father was General of Artillery and Governor of Thorn.

In 1911, he became a sea-cadet in the Kaiserliche Marine. Appointed a Naval Lieutenant (second class) in 1915 he took command of the sea-flying station at Norderney. He kept this secret from his family – his older brother lost his life flying patrol. Wolfgang told his parents he had joined the zeppelin service as many considered it safer than flying aeroplanes because of unreliable motors. He was a *secret* flyer!

On May 1, 1915, a propaganda release exposed his secret when his family learned that he commanded the Seefliegerabzeichen. This was the future Naval Air Arm. His group gathered information deep into the North Sea operating from the Isle of Borkum. In November 1915, he commanded flight operations from the mother ship *Answald* that operated out of Kurland. In December while on patrol, a Russian warship shot him down



but he managed to crash in the shallow surf. A German cavalry unit found him wandering along a beach near Kurlands.

In February 1916, he took command of a special commando group at the Heinkel works at Warnemunde. The Heinkel torpedo planes operated from there.

He finished the war an admiralty staff officer, attached to flight command of High Sea Fleet. After the war he became a country landowner when he inherited the family estate of *Schonwaldchen* (lovely wood).

The surrender terms forbade Germany building power-operated planes. To avoid this Dornier built a factory in Marina di Pisa in Italy. There the company developed the Wal (Whale), a seaplane of world class. Later, Dornier relocated at Friedrichshafen and continued building planes as the Manzell-Dornier-Metallbauten Company.

In 1927, von Gronau was the principal of seaplane flight training at the German Traffic Flying School. He had established his school without the permission of the Transport Ministry.

In secrecy he had started with a reconstructed Dornier – Wal flying boat – Roald Amundsen's trustworthy plane. In 1931, von Gronau flew his Whale over Greenland to Chicago. This was the first crossing of the inhospitable icy terrain of Greenland in a plane. In so doing he discovered a mountain range on the east coast. Later, the Danish Government honoured him by naming the range *Gronau-Nunatacker*. After a forced landing because of contaminated petrol, he was back in the air transiting Hudson Bay to Chicago. He had pioneered the Polar route.

On his return, the Ministerial Director of Brandenburg presented him the Kleist *Prince of Homburg* for his triumphs – albeit done without permission!

Italian General Italo Balbo invited him to accompany his mass formation long-distance propaganda flight across the Atlantic to North America. Twenty-four Savoia-Marchetti S.55X monoplane flying boats left Orbetello, Rome, on July 1, 1933. On 12 August, 23 planes arrived back over Rome. Mussolini promoted Balbo Italy's first Air Marshal. Balbo died in an Allied air-raid on Tripoli in 1941.

In 1934, von Gronau became vice-president of the Aero Club of Deutschland and then six months later the Club's president. In 1938, his wife Hertha accompanied him in a Messerschmitt Taifun (Typhoon) in a Cairo competition.

The death-bed words of this exceptional airman show his clarity of purpose:

"Throughout my flying career I did nothing lightheartedly but to pioneer airline routes for the future."

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## THE AMERICAN FLYING HEIRESS – Miss BESSIE OWEN

Her adventure started the previous year (1936) when she took-off from California. She landed at New York and loaded her single-engined plane onto an Antwerp bound ship. By small stages she flew her red Waco around Europe. In Switzerland a mechanic, Henri Magnenat, joined her for the flight through the Balkans to Turkey. They continued across the Persian Gulf to India, Burma, Siam, Indo-China, Nanning and finally landed in Hong Kong in mid-1937.

Her fame spread to the Philippines where an enthusiast wanted her plane. Grabbing Henri, she stormed across the China Sea and quickly closed the deal. Bessie returned to her California home, a passenger, aboard the budding PanAm Clipper service.

\* \* \*

**MAURICE NOGUES (1889-1934)**

Officier de la Legion d'Honneur  
Medaille Militaire

Croix De Guerre 1914-1918 avec 5 citations a l'Ordre de l'Armee

Grande Plaque de la Ligue Aeronautique de France (1915)

Grande Medaille De Vermeil de l'Aero-Club de France (3 March 1928)

Grande Medaille D'Or de l'Aero-Club de France (1930)

Grande Medaille De Vermeil de la Societe d'Encouragement au Progres (9 March 1924)

Cite a l'Ordre de la Nation (1934)

\* \* \*

Maurice Nogues began flying in 1909 at Issy Les Moulineaux in an Avion (Voisin). That year he participated in a meeting at the Crau. He received International Pilot Licence No. 114 on 20 June, 1910 and celebrated by competing in the *Aviation Week* held at Lyon and Reims. In 1912 he participated in a flying competition at Nancy.

On 22 August, 1914, he volunteered for air service at Mairie, Versailles. He became military pilot No. 682 and served in Squadrons F29, N515, VB107 and N73 – the famous Cigogne (*Stork*) Escadrille. This Corps d'Elite did not wear traditional wings – these they replaced with a small stork emblem. Later he became a formidable night-bombing pilot. Captain Nogues was twice wounded and, at war's end, wore the decorations of the Legion d'Honneur, Medaille Militaire and the Croix De Guerre.

In 1922, he became a pilot with the Franco-Roumaine Company. One year later he commanded his first flight Paris to Bucharest with intermediate landings at Strasbourg and Belgrade.

In 1924, Nogues became Chief Pilot and assessed the following Franco-Roumaine routes; Constantinople to Angora, Zurich to Vienna through Innsbruck, Paris to Moscow, and the next year the route Paris to Teheran.

In 1926, he resigned from the Franco-Roumaine and joined the Trans Aviation Company as Director of Development. In 1927, he carried out safety checks on the route Marseille to Beirut with landings at Naples, Corfu, Athens, and Castelloriz. He piloted the first regular passenger flight Marseille to Beirut, in 1928, and followed with an assessment of the route to Baghdad.

During 1930, Trans Aviation expanded its activities to the Far East. In a Farman monoplane, with Captain Marsot at the controls, he surveyed the route from Paris to Saigon. In the following year he accompanied the first regular passenger service to Saigon with Captain Andre Launay at the controls.

In late 1932, Nogues was the non-flying commander that evaluated the Orient air-mail link from Saigon to Hanoi, Hong Kong, Canton and Shanghai. The plane was an Avion Fokker V11 b-3m, registered F-ALSB *La Zelle*. The operating crew were Captain Andre Launay, Mechanic Schwayer and Radio Officer Queyrel. Aboard the plane the French Postal Service had dispatched several bags of mail for Hong Kong, Canton and Shanghai.

*La Zelle* left Saigon at 0600 hours on 30 October, 1932 for Hanoi with observers Glaize and Commandant Robert Gannay.

They departed the next day for Fort Bayard (Kouang-Tcheou) landing at 1530 hours. They continued their trip to Canton arriving late in the evening. Their flight to Hong Kong on 1 November took slightly less than 2½ hours.

Returning from Shanghai they began their return flight from Hong Kong on 4 November. They arrived in Saigon on 8 November.

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Their *postal* flight was a signal success. In Paris they off-loaded air mail franked Shanghai, Canton and Hong Kong. They had brought and carried the first air-mail between the Orient and France.

In 1933, Maurice Nogues (now Colonel) became the Assistant General Manager of Air France. That year he inspected the Company's route from Paris to South America. Returning from checking the Paris, Saigon, Paris route his plane, an *Emeraude* (Emerald), crashed near Corbigny on 15 January 1934. A grateful Government held a national memorial service for him and his companions.

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## MARIE-ANTOINETTE MARYSE HILSZ: (1901-1946)

Capitaine des Forces Feminines de l'Air.

La Legion d'Honneur – Chevalier 1933 – Officier 1937.

International League of Aviators – Honoured 1931 & 1934.

Plaque of the Aero Club of France – Presented 1937.

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*Maryse* Hilsz was born 9 March, 1901, at Levallois-Perret (Seine). Her family originally hailed from the d'Alsace district.

In 1922, she found employment in a ladies fashion salon. That year she made her first exhibition parachute jump with the *Mamet Squadron* – for flying tuition. Soon she became a specialist *junper* with the Maurice Finat dare-devils. By 1929 she had made 122 parachute descends.

*Maryse's* flight instructor considered her a pilot of exceptional talent. On 24 June, 1929, she flew a *Morane-Saulnier* plane from Le Bourget to London and back. Her plane, powered by a Clerget 130 hp engine, took a flight time of 5h 45m.

Three days later, in the same plane, she attempted a flight to Amsterdam. A broken oil line forced her to land near Hasselt (Belgium) – just 500 m short of her destination. *Maryse* did little damage to a tulip field, but extensively damaged her plane.

On 21 April, 1930, she received Commercial Pilot Licence No. 1293. In November she celebrated this milestone with a flight to Saigon. Her plane was a biplane *Morane-Saulnier* Moth powered by a Gipsy 100 hp engine. Her flight log shows she reached Calcutta on 24 November. By 5 December she had reached Saigon after 92 hours flying time. Considering an enforced stop in Rangoon waiting for a replacement fuel tank this was a splendid achievement. She left Saigon on 11 December and with Le Bourget almost in sight a broken fuel line forced her to land – the date was 18 December.

In 1931, the Orient beckoned again! On 10 January she left France bound for Indo-China. By 7 February she was back at Le Bourget, despite a force-landing 60k from Athens in heavy fog and several mechanical problems. She had covered an astonishing 27,000 km and, even more meritorious, she did the flight solo.

January 31, 1932, she flew a *Farman 190, Joe II*, with a Gnome 300 hp, Le Bourget to Madagascar, with *Mechanic Dronne*. Her flight log shows they landed at Niamey (French West Africa) on 3 February. On the 5th they left for Zinder and Fort-Lamy but a broken oil pipe forced her to land at Berni 80 km after leaving Naimey. The splendid aviator *Vicomte de Sibour* flew her replacement parts from Paris.

They were delayed at Berni until 15 March and arrived in Bangui (Central African Republic) three days later. On the 31st she had reached her goal, landing at Tananarive (Madagascar) after a flight of 10,000 km. They were back at Le Bourget by 7 May – the first woman to fly from Brazzaville to Paris.

At Villacoublay, on 20 August, she captured the female altitude record. In a Morane-Saulnier 222, powered by a Gnome-Rhone Jupiter 450 hp, she reached 10,200 m.

Her restless nature saw her airborne from Le Bourget, on 1 April 1933, with her sights set on Tokyo. This time Lemaire looked after the mechanism of her beloved *Joe II*. Twelve thousand kilometres later they were in Hanoi having staged through Brindisi, Athens, Alep, Karachi, Calcutta and Vientiane. At Hanoi, Lemaire gave *Joe II* a thorough check before continuing their flight on 13 April. The following day they were in Hong Kong and reached Tokyo two days later.

January 26, 1934, she left Villacoublay for Tokyo. Her mechanic was Prax and their plane was a Breguet 330 powered by a Hispano 650 hp engine. Arriving in Tokyo on 6 February they were back in the air on 20 March and at Le Bourget on 28 April after a casual trip.

In 1935, she attacked her 1932 altitude record in a Morane-Saulnier. That June 17, the powerful 600 hp Gnome-Rhone Mistral K-9 carried her to 11,289 m above Villacoublay.

September 1 found her capturing the late Helene Boucher's record between Buc and Cannes. Ten days later over Villacoublay she reached an altitude of 6,500 m. Her plane was a tiny Mauboussin, with an 80 hp Salmson engine.

On 24 September she gained the female altitude record for planes of the second category. This was for monoplanes up to 450 kg – she reached 7,338 m.

June 23, 1936, flying a Portez 50 with a Gnome-Rhone 14 *Krsd* engine, she regained the female altitude record. In just 36 minutes, above Villacoublay, she reached 14,309m.

In August she bought the late Helene Boucher's Caudron Super-Rafale 680-5 for 25,000Fr. On the 29th the reliable 220 hp Renault engine screamed around the 760 km Bruc-Cannes course in 1 hour 52 minutes 43 seconds.

On 19 December she escaped death by a thread while assaulting the women's air speed record. She was flying the Caudron monoplane in which M. Michel Detroyat scored his triumphs at the National Air Races in America that summer.

Mlle. Hilsz left the Istres aerodrome and turned while climbing towards the south. During a full-speed run she felt the controls go mushy and throttled back. The same happened on her second run, but before she could reduce power she was thrown out of the plane. Her parachute saved her life but in opening broke two of her ribs.

The parachute, an automatic-opening type, did not have the built-in safety feature that delays opening until an object's velocity decreases. The natural terminal velocity of an unstreamlined human form is about 110 mph – the plane's then speed exceeded 280 mph!

Mlle. Hilsz fell into L'Estorac Lake, but the parachute dragged her across its surface faster than would-be rescuers could row. The wind tossed her on a beach from where she was rushed to a Marseille hospital.

The then women's air speed record was 276 mph. The late Helene Boucher retained her splendid 1934 achievement.

In the years preceding World War II her name was rarely out of the news. She continued to make inroads into long-distance flying, altitude and speed records. She held her own against the men.

In September 1939, she flew beside her male counterparts against the German invader. She was a highly regarded aerial photographer. That day in June 1940 when France capitulated she refused to leave her homeland. *Maryse* ignored German directives to organise aviation in Provence, and returned to her first job of modelling women's apparel.

After the Liberation, she returned to the Feminine Forces of the Air. She accepted an appointment with the Liaison Airport Ministry Group (GLAM). On 30 January 1946, she left Villacoublay for Marignane in a Siebel 204. An engineer and radio operator

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accompanied her. The Siebel 204 encountered severe turbulence and disintegrated – crashing near Bourg-en-Bresse.

Mlle. Marie-Antoinette *Maryse* Hilsz's memory is perpetuated at Levallois-Perret. A simple monument salutes the deeds of this exceptional aviatrix.

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### VICOMTE DE SIBOUR

A lesser-known aviator to visit the Orient was the French nobleman Vicomte de Sibour.

The aviation world saluted him when, on 16 June 1931, he left Paris for Peking in his Avion Farman 190. Mechanic Damet was in charge of the Gnome Rhone Titan Major 300hp engine. Comtesse de Sibour and Mme Wilden were his passengers.

This flight log records the segments of his flight. Unfortunately, sector times are not available.

16 June	Paris – Koenigsberg	1,400 km
18	Koenigsberg – Moscow	1,150
19	Moscow – Omak	2,250
21	Omsk – Irkutsk	2,050
23	Irkutsk – Tchita	650
24	Tchita – Kharbine – Moukden	1,700
26	Moukden – Peking	650
		Return Flight
25 August	Peking – Tchita	1,400 km
26	Tchita – Irkutsk	650
27	Irkutsk – Novo Sibirsk	1,450
28	Novo Sibirsk – Sverdlovsk	1,040
29	Sverdlovsk – Kazan	1,120
30	Kazan – Weliki Louki – Koenigsberg	1,800
31	Koenigsberg – Berlin – Shaffen	1,170
1 September	Shaffen – Le Bourget, Paris	270

\* \* \*

On 23 September 1933, he left Cannes, France, in a twin-engined (Gipsy designation) de Havilland DH84. Aboard the Dragon were his Comtesse, their sons, and mechanic Damet. A month later they arrived at Saigon and on 12 November – Hanoi. In early December they landed at Kai Tak, Hong Kong.

Their return to France was as casual as their outward flight. They returned to Paris (Le Bourget) on 20 February 1934.

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Other than a desert incursion to bring spare parts to *Maryse* Hilsz, in February 1932, few records are available of this splendid French pioneer.