The background of the slide is a collage of various postcards and stamps, mostly in shades of blue and white. Some visible elements include a circular postmark, a rectangular stamp with a figure, and various text fragments from different postcards.

Aviation Pioneering on Postcards Part I: Beginnings

The Philatelic Gathering

April 27, 2019

Paul M. Pitcher, DVM, MS

This is the first slide.

Scope

- through August, 1909
- Europe (France); United States
- Focused on:
 - Men and Machines
 - Dates (relative to significant historical aviation events)
 - Places
 - Sender expressions
- Franking: minor interest
- Postmark: major interest

This presentation focuses on the earliest accomplishments of heavier-than-air aviation pioneers, whose prowess was measured in height, distance, and speed. The scope of this presentation ends with the first major international flying competition, the Grande Semaine D' Aviation, held in Reims France, August, 1909. Postcards for this presentation were curated to represent significant historical achievements - commemorated in the image, documented in time and place by the postmarks, and witnessed by the senders if possible.

Background: Postcard Popularity

1873: First postcards issued by POD

1898: Private issue of postcards authorized by POD

1904: St Louis Exposition

(Louisiana Purchase Expo)

1907: POD authorizes Divided Backs
“Golden Age”

1910: 668 million postcards mailed

1913: 968 million postcards mailed

2007: 5798 million postcards mailed

2018: 2706 million postcards mailed



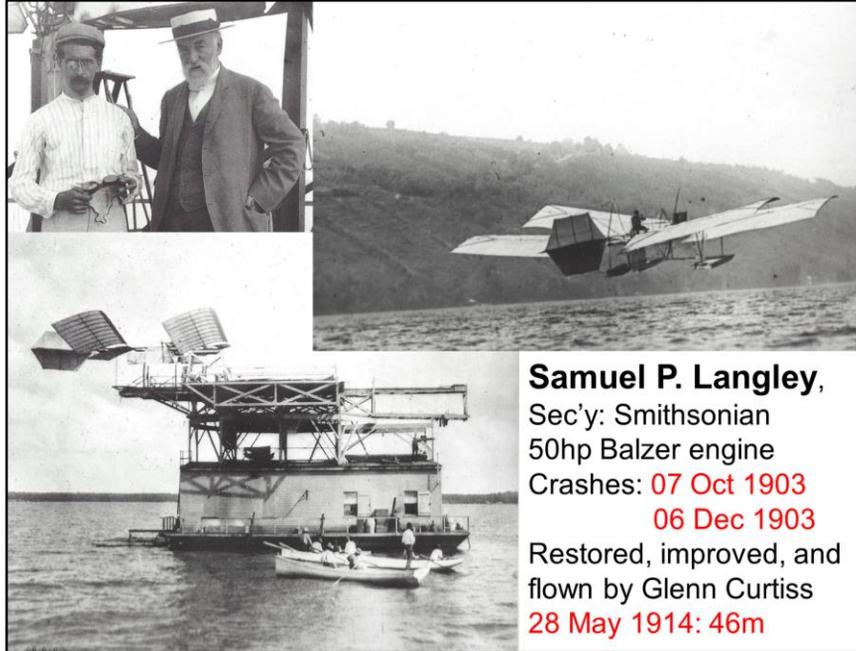
The period beginning with the Wrights’ first manned flights at Kitty Hawk in 1903 through the Grande Semaine D’Aviation in August, 1909 corresponds closely with the rise in popularity of postcards as a medium for greeting friends and family, often over long distances. Thus, the volume of material in the marketplace is great, allowing selectivity. The 23 postcards exhibited in this presentation are numbered in cyan. Other, supporting material is not numbered.

Telephones: US

	<u>1907</u>	<u>1913</u>	<u>1917</u>	<u>1922</u>
Population (millions)	87	97	103	110
Telephones (millions)	4.6	7.3	10.0	14.3
Telephones, 1 per	19	13	10	<8

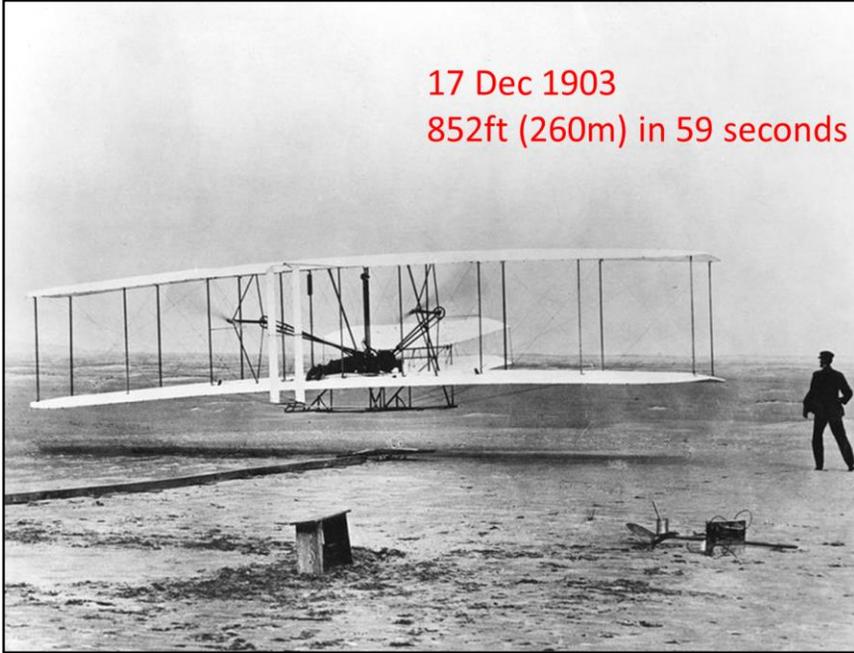
In this era, postcards were often used to 'notify' and were facilitated by rapid delivery (railroad).

Impact of telephones on the postcard medium?



Samuel Pierpont Langley, with engineer and pilot Charles Manly, upper left. Image at upper right is Curtiss' flight, after modifications: Addition of floats, improvement of rigging, improvement in engine, change in conning location. Curtiss was a foremost pioneer in hydroaviation, along with the Voisin brothers of France.

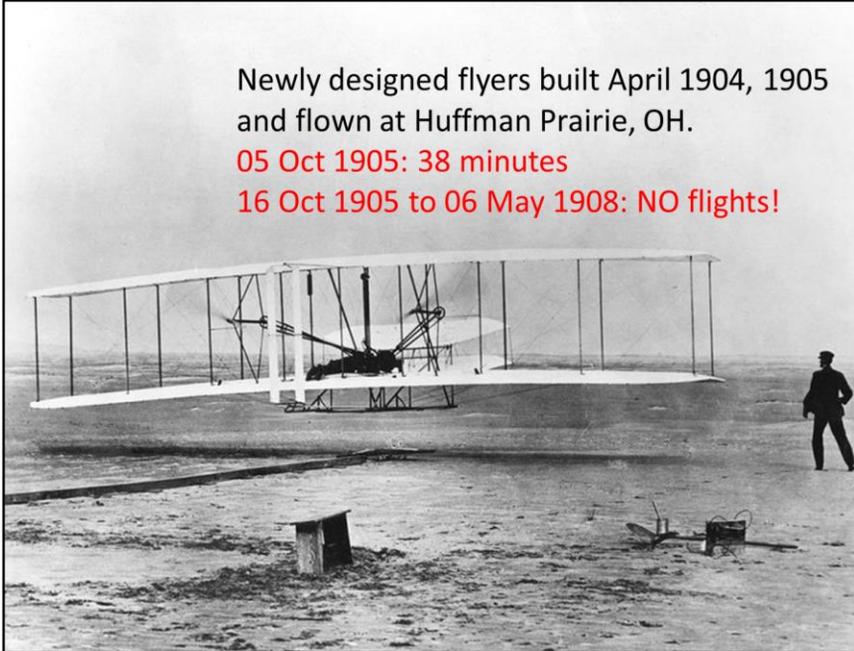
17 Dec 1903
852ft (260m) in 59 seconds



Newly designed flyers built April 1904, 1905
and flown at Huffman Prairie, OH.

05 Oct 1905: 38 minutes

16 Oct 1905 to 06 May 1908: NO flights!



962. - M. Santos-Dumont s'élève avec son Aéroplane n° 14 bis (Novembre 1906) J.H.

Alberto Santos-Dumont 14^{bis}
Chateau la Bagatelle

26 Oct 1906: 60m x 5m

- First flight of a manned, powered, heavier-than-air machine in Europe to be certified by [Aéro-Club de France](#).
- Won Deutsch-Archdeacon Prize for the first officially observed flight of more than 25 meters. ₣3,000

12 Nov 1906: 220m in 0:21.5

- First world record recognized by [Federation Aeronautique Internationale](#)
- First person to be filmed in an airplane in flight.

CDS: VERSAILLES A PARIS
24 -11 08

1

1 - Bureau, place de la... Paris

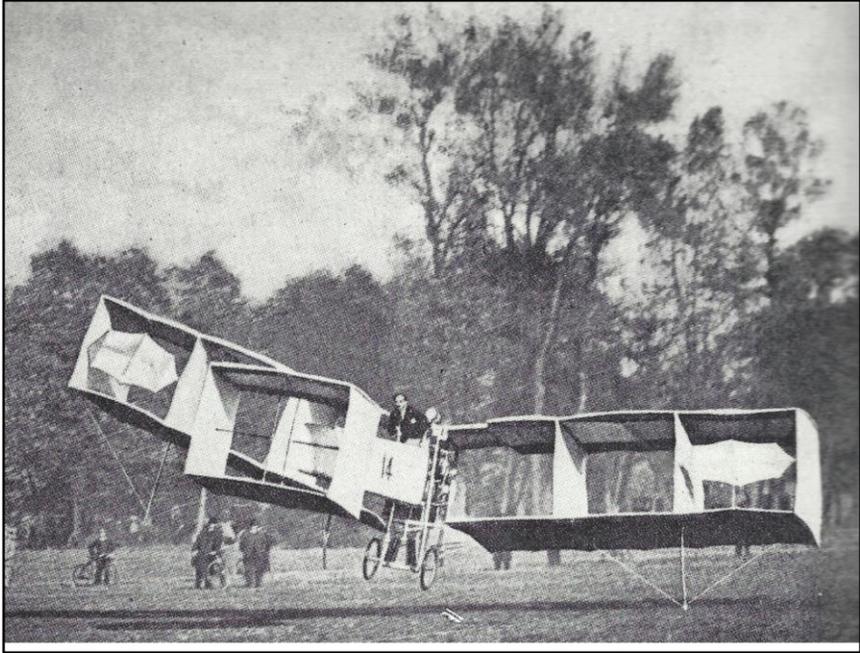
La Correspondance en recto n'est pas acceptée par tous les Pays Etrangers. (Se renseigner à la Poste)

CORRESPONDANCE

ADRESSE

M^{lle} Juliette Bailly
Caen
M^{me} Laignes
Laignes
(Lorient)

To convert French francs to 2019 US dollars, multiply by 3 (presuming average annual inflation is 2.5%). So, 3000 francs was about \$9,000 in today's dollars.



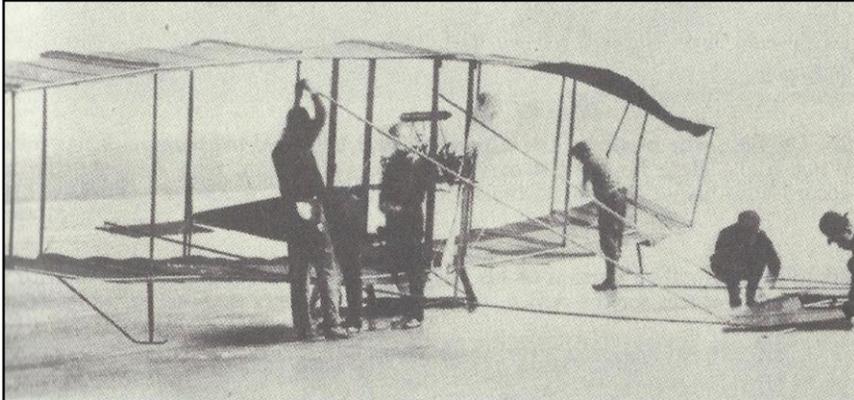


Aerial Experiment Association (July, 1907)

“to get into the air”

“Bell’s Boys” (R to L):

Glenn H. Curtiss, J.A. Douglas McCurdy, A.G. Bell, F.W.
(Casey) Baldwin, Lt. Thomas Selfridge.



Lt. Thomas Selfridge, "Red Wing"

flown by F. W. (Casey) Baldwin, Keuka Lake, Hammondsport, NY

12 Mar 1908: 97m 17 Mar 1908: 37m

Developed in conjunction with [Aerial Experiment Association](#)

No means of lateral control.

First public flight of an airplane in the United States (contested by Wrights)

969. - Biplan Américain June Bug « White Wing »

Plans courbés, envergure 13^m ; profondeur des plans au centre 2^m, aux extrémités 1^m20 Gouvernail horizontal 2^m4 × 0^m60.
Gouvernail vertical à 1^m50 du siège.
Queue cellulaire de 4^m30 longueur sur 0^m90 largeur. Distance des plans au centre 1^m98, aux extrémités 1^m20. Surface totale
36 m. carrés. Poids total avec l'aviateur 285 kgr. Moteur 25 HP 8 cylindres Curtiss. Le 21 mai 1908 gagne le prix de la Coupe H.



F. W. (Casey) Baldwin, 'Drome #2, "White Wing"

Stony Brook Farm, Hammondsport, NY

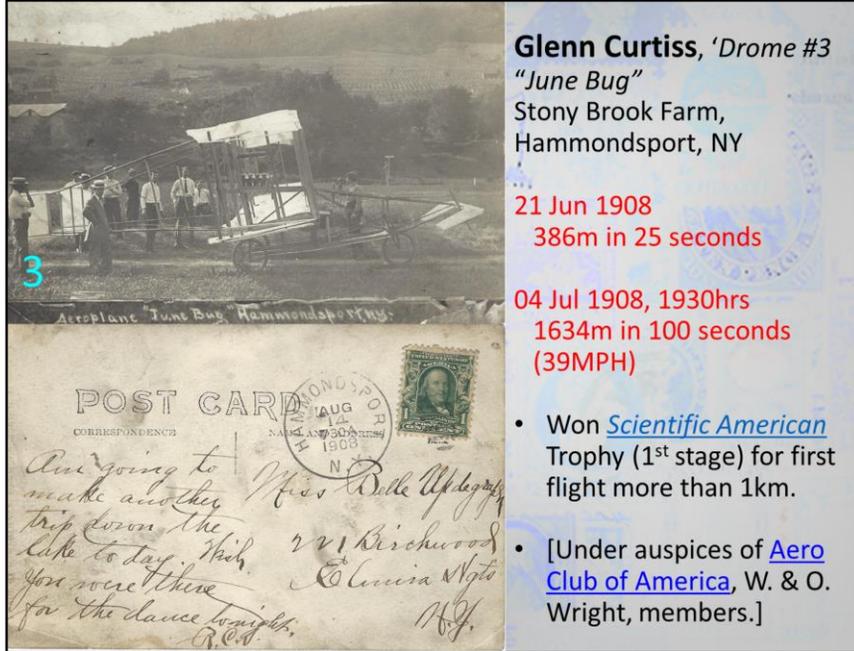
Developed in conjunction with [Aerial Experiment Association](#)

Alexander G. Bell: "movable surfaces at the extremities of the wing piece"

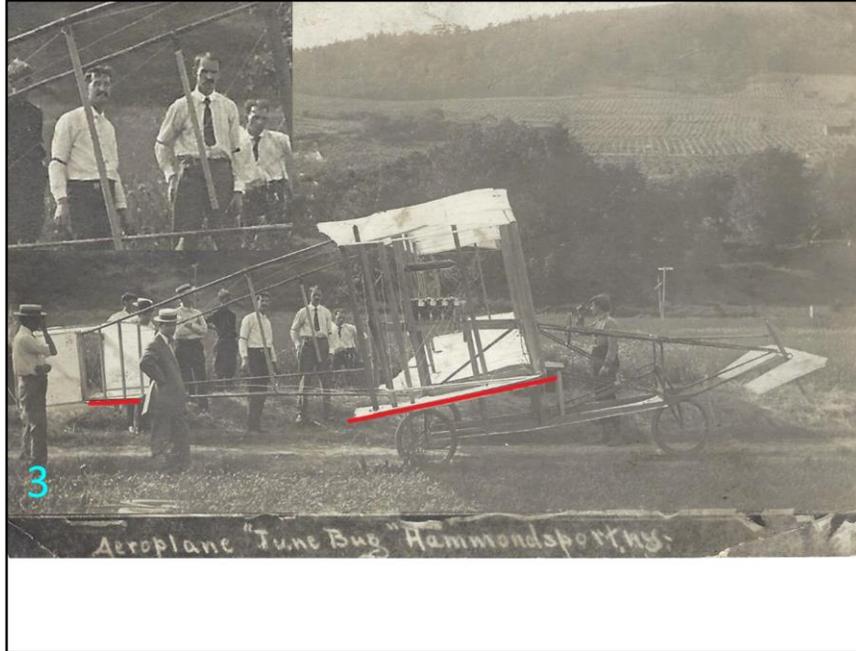
18 May 1908: 90m x 3m

21 May 1908: 310m in 19 seconds; Glenn Curtiss' first flight.

23 May 1908: wrecked beyond repair (McCurdy)



CDS dated 6 weeks after historic flight of this machine, which manifests a layout that would be used profusely in the coming years... Mailed on a Friday, to a female companion. Elmira Heights is just down Keuka Lake from Hammondsport.



A bit more discussion of the image. Glenn Curtiss (pilot) in the necktie. Casey Baldwin on his right. Long shadows witness this late-afternoon photograph. Grape arbors on the hillside place the location at Stony Brook Farm. Very high resolution Real Photo Postcard reveals facial expressions that seem to convey anticipation, if not trepidation, and allows close examination of construction details of the machine. Note relative angles of incidence of main planes and (fixed) tailplane. If flown this way, plane would pitch up violently, which is exactly what happened on the first attempt at flight with this machine. After an emergency landing, tailplane was adjusted for better vertical control and the historic, trophy-winning flight occurred at 7:30PM. These observations lead me to conclude that the image was photographed immediately prior to the very first attempt at flight.



Glenn Curtiss at the controls of the Golden Flier (note 4-cylinder engine with sidedraft carburetors. Scientific American trophy depicts Langley's machine on the globe.



Glenn Curtiss
Golden Flier "Gold Bug"
Hempstead Plains, NY

Built for Aero Society of NY: \$5000

12 Jul 1909: 2mi
"longest flight yet seen in the vicinity of New York"

16 Jul 1909: 15mi, 23min
17 Jul 1909: 24.7 mi

- Secured *Scientific American* Trophy (2nd stage)

17 Jul 1909

920

Aeroplane lasted 5 days before being smashed beyond repair in setting the record.



Wilbur Wright in France

LeMans & Camp D'Auvours

Arrived France: 29 May 1908

First Flight: 08 Aug 1908
(LeMans) 2 miles in 2 minutes

CDS
GARE D'A...V.... SARTHE
3:30 28 __ 08

Receiver
LA SUZE S..... SARTHE
7: __ 29 __ 08

*"My dear Marie,
I just saw our neighbors when we
were going to drink champagne
with Landry and other friends. I'm
doing very well and at home it
must be the same. We are in the
best company, as captains we do
pretty much what we like. G.F.
11th Company of the 28th
Territorial Regiment"*

Wilbur traveled to France to sell his invention to the French Army, since the US military expressed very little interest. He sent a plane over in May that was severely damaged in shipping, taking until August to be repaired. He quickly outgrew the environs of LeMans, and moved the enterprise 10 miles East to Camp D'Auvours.

Postcard mailed from Gare D'Auvours to La Suze, both in the Sartre region. One must presume that "our neighbors" refers to Wilbur Wright and his retinue, who shared the Camp D'Auvours with a French artillery regiment (the 11th of the 28th?). Wright had arrived at Camp D'Auvours a week prior to this card being mailed.



5

Wilbur Wright in France
 LeMans & Camp D'Auvours

Move to Camp D'Auvours:
 21 Aug 1908

01 Sep 1908: 2 hrs
 (endurance test)

03 Sep 1908: 10 minutes

16 Sep 1908: 39 minutes

21 Sep 1908: 1:32hrs, 41 mi

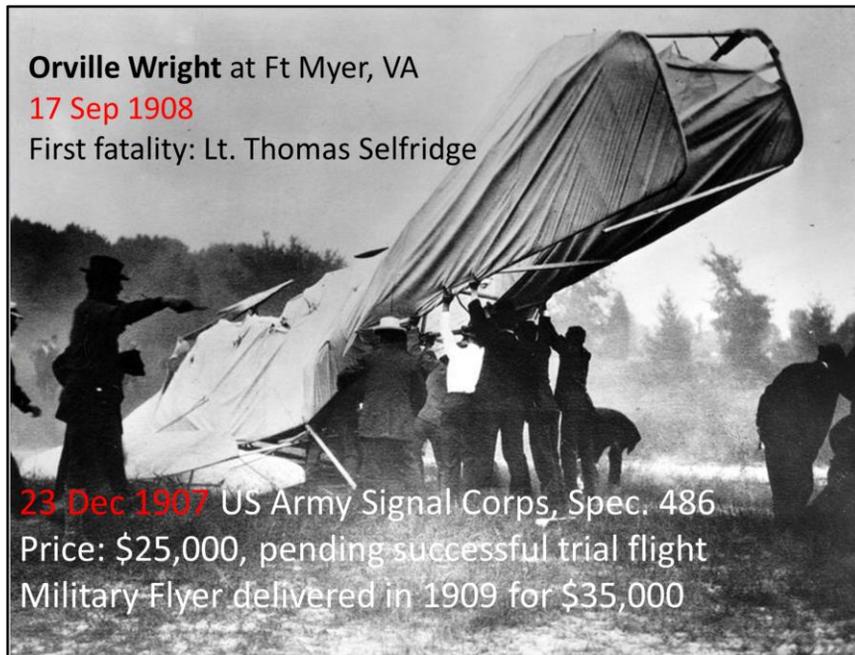
03 Oct 1908: 55.6 minutes
 (first with a passenger)

CDS
 LE MANS SARTHE 1 -11 08

Receiver:
 NANCY M^{THE} ET M^{LLE} 2 -11 08



Ernest Zens was a frequent passenger in Wilbur's experiments.



More than \$0.5 million in today's dollars!

988. L'Aéroplane Cellulaire FARMAN N°1 Moteur Renault 80 H. P. J. H.



**Henri Farman, No. 1^{bis}
(Gabriel Voisin)
at Issy le Moulineaux**

23 Oct 1907: 186m in 15.4 seconds

26 Oct 1907: 771m

09 Nov 1907: 1030m in 1:14.

- Won *Archdeacon Cup*

13 Jan 1908: 1.5km in 1:28

- Won *Grand Prix D'Aviation* for first round-trip flight of > 1 kilometer: ₣50,000

06 Jul 1908: 20.3 minutes

- Won *Armangoud Prix* for first flight of > ¼ hour: ₣10,000

CARTE POSTALE

Correspondance Adresse

24/10/08

Monsieur C. Clement

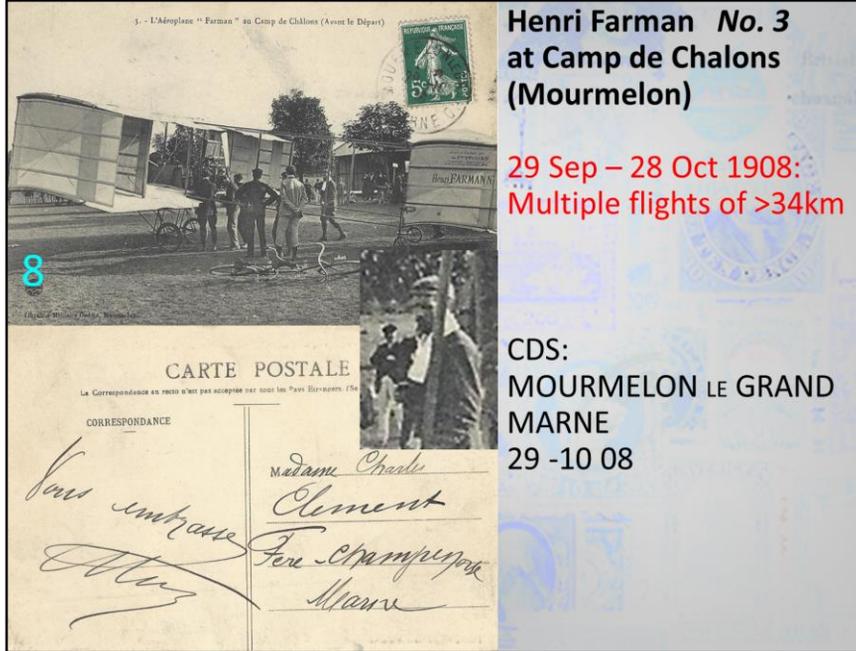
neg

Tour de Champagne

Marne

J. Henner photographeur - Paris

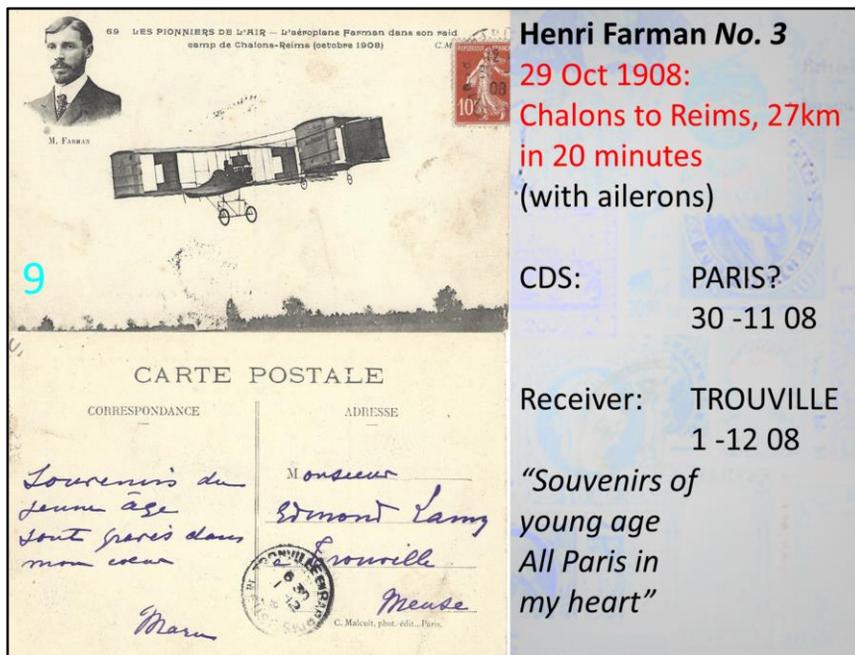
Inset: Henri Farman, standing on starboard, behind wing.



Henri Farman No. 3 at Camp de Chalons (Mourmelon)

29 Sep – 28 Oct 1908:
Multiple flights of >34km

CDS:
MOURMELON LE GRAND
MARNE
29 -10 08



Henri Farman No. 3

29 Oct 1908:
Chalons to Reims, 27km
in 20 minutes
(with ailerons)

CDS: PARIS?
30 -11 08

Receiver: TROUVILLE
1 -12 08

"Souvenirs of
young age
All Paris in
my heart"

10

e Postale

Commissaire pour l'expédition de la Coupe NICHOLEN pour l'Aviation 1908-1909. Pour AUBREUIL, Prévôt de France - 17 1903. COURTES NICHOLEN.

ADRESSE

M^{lle} Chérie Beauchain
47, rue de la République
Honfleur
Calvados

Bonne année à tout
Marguerite Follet

Wilbur Wright in France

Coupe Michelin

Record for longest flight:
31 Dec 1908: 124.7km
2:18:33.6
 ₣20,000 (+ ₣10,000)

CDS:
 _____ SARTHE 31 -12 08

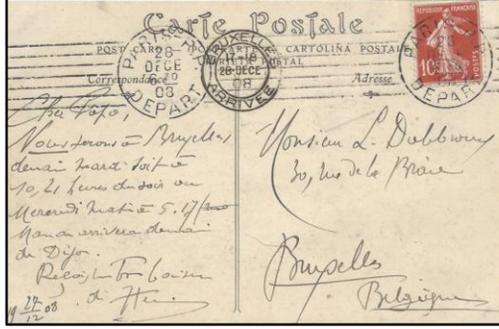
Receiver:
 HONFLEUR CALVADOS
 _ _ 09

"Happy New Year to everyone"

Did Marguerite witness the historic flight?



11



**Capt. Ferdinand Ferber
(F. De Rue)**

Type IX

Founded *Ligue Nationale
Aérienne*

15 Sep 1908: 9.65km in 9min

Participated (Voisin) in:

- Port-Aviation meetings
 - 23 May 1909
 - 13 Jun 1909
- Douai 1909
- Vichy 1909
- Reims 1909

CDS:
PARIS 28 -12 08



12

Leon Delagrange Juvisy-sur Orge Viry-Châtillon

23 May 1909
Official Opening, Port-Aviation

Prix de Lagatinerie (F5,000)
10 laps x 1.2km

4 competitors, incl. De Rue,
Rougier, de Pischof

Delagrange completed 5800m
in 10:18.6 before dark, was
named winner, but only half
the prize money was awarded.

"follement ovationné"

CDS:
VIRY-CHATILLON et OISE
16 6 _



1078. - Monoplan Antoinette IV transformé
Muni d'un petit de lancement remplissant les trois de lancement - Moteur Antoinette à cylindres en HP Antoinette J. H.



13

Paris, 18 juin 1909
J. M. de la Haye

CARTE POSTALE

La Correspondance en recto n'est pas acceptée par tous les Pays Étrangers. (Se reporter au verso.)

CORRESPONDANCE

ADRESSE



13) Le monoplan occupe
actuellement l'attention
Pilote par Latham
il a volé plus d'une
heure. Dans quelques
jours Latham se propose
de traverser la Manche
Jusqu'à présent il détient
le record des monoplanes.

Monsieur de la Haye
San José
par Montevideo
Uruguay (Ind. Amérique)

Hubert Latham
Antoinette IV
Camp de Chalons

May 1909: New duration
record for Europe: 1:07

06 Jun 1909: Prix Amboise
Goupy: 6km in 4:13

CDS: 18-6 09
R. DANTON PARIS 25

"The monoplane currently
occupies the attention. Latham
has flown one hour. In a few
days Latham offers to cross the
English Channel. Until now he
holds the record for
monoplanes. J.M."



La Brayelle
 10 Jan 1909: *Ligue Nationale Aérienne*,
 Douai branch founded
 28 Jun 1909 to 18 Jul 1909
 Purse: F26,000
Prix du Nord: speed, 2km (F3,000)
Prix Mahieu: speed, 1km (F1,000)
Grand Prix de Douai: distance (F6,000)

Louis Bleriot debuts model XII
 03 Jul 1909: 47.277km in 47:17
 Flight terminated by blown engine, third-degree burns to foot.

18 Jul: 1km in 1:09
 2km in 2:29



Louis Paulhan *Octavie No.3* (Voisin)
 15 Jul 1909: 48.178km in 1:17:19
 18 Jul 1909: 150m world altitude record

First time for two aeroplanes to compete together on the same course!

Red arrow points to exhaust downpipe in the Model XII which was responsible for Bleriot's burn injury. The injury severely hampered him in the Channel attempt, 11 days later, and into the races in late August at Reims.



18-25 Jul 1909

Purse: F30,000

Grand Prix de la Ville de Vichy:

speed, 20km (F16,000)

Prix du Passage de L'Allaire : speed,

4km Xcountry

Prix du Tour de Piste: speed,

1.666km

Paul Tissandier Wright-Ariel

21 Jul 1909: 20km in 23:29

4km in 5:01.4

1.666km in 1:52

**Louis Paulhan Octavie No.3
(Voisin)**

24 Jul 1909: 4km in 5:00

25 Jul 1909: Meeting terminated by violent thunderstorm that wrecked grandstand and 4 hangars.

14

**Louis Bleriot XI
Calais to Dover**

January, 1909

- Model XI introduced.

“Most successful embodiment of the Wrights’ wing-warping ever applied to the monoplane”
– *Gabriel Voisin*

25 Jul 1909:
26 mi in 32 minutes

- Won *Daily Mail* prize: £1000

CARTE POSTALE
 La Correspondance au recto n'est pas acceptée par les pays étrangers
 CORRESPONDANCE
 PETIT-BEURRE LU LÉVÉRE-UTILE
 Monsieur A. Sauvage
 Ingénieur
 Mines de Bong-Apui
 par Cam. Kij
 Courane
 Annam

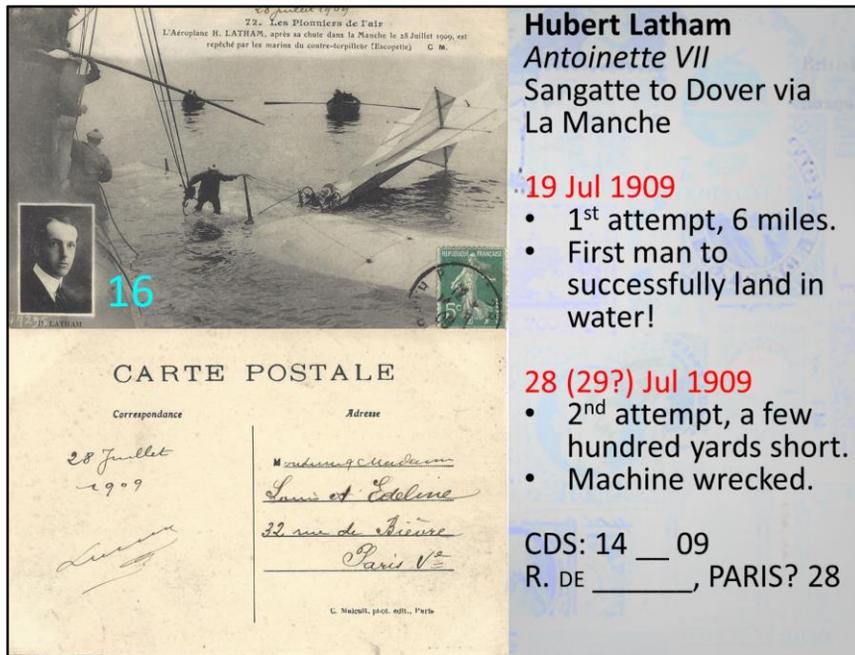
Postcard mailed from Charleroi February 21, 1911 and delivered to Annam, Indochina (a French colony), March 28, 1911.



Postcard I wish I had in the collection: Bleriot's landing in Dover...Pau was Bleriot's home airfield, where he built his machines and trained their pilots.



Another in this series of magnificent period art cards. This one is unused.



Hubert Latham
Antoinette VII
 Sangatte to Dover via
 La Manche

- 19 Jul 1909**
- 1st attempt, 6 miles.
 - First man to successfully land in water!

- 28 (29?) Jul 1909**
- 2nd attempt, a few hundred yards short.
 - Machine wrecked.

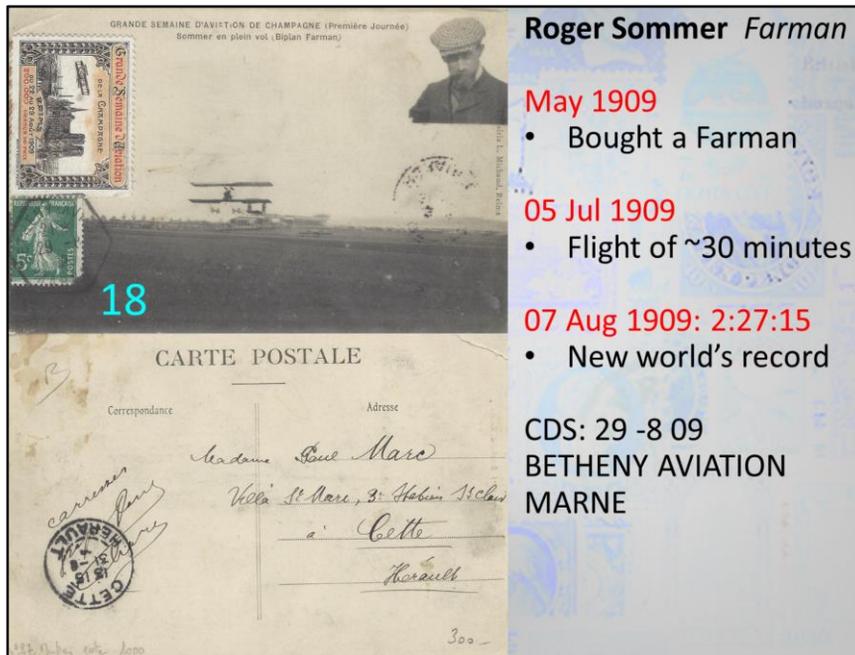
CDS: 14 __ 09
 R. DE _____, PARIS? 28

Postcard image from the July 19 attempt.



17

33 - LOCOMOTION AÉRIENNE - LATHAM, sur "Antoinette VII" au départ de Sangatte (29 Juillet 1909). 



Roger Sommer Farman

May 1909

- Bought a Farman

05 Jul 1909

- Flight of ~30 minutes

07 Aug 1909: 2:27:15

- New world's record

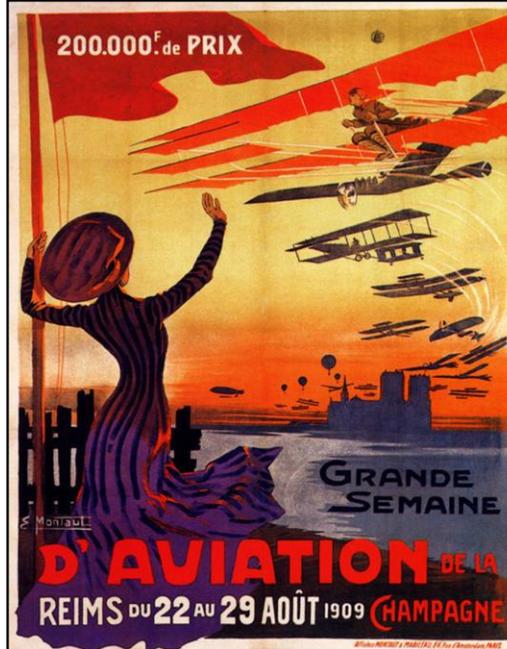
CDS: 29 -8 09

BETHENY AVIATION
MARNE

Card was purchased and mailed during the first Grande Semaine D'Aviation, Betheny, Reims.

Other Significant Pioneers (1905-1909)

J.C.H. Ellehammer	Denmark
Frères Voisin (Charles and Gabriel)	France
Robert Esnault Pelterie	France
Leon Levavasseur	France
M. De Pischof	France
William W. Christmas	USA
Georges Legagneux	France
Welferinger	France
Samuel Franklin Cody (Cowdery)	USA/England
Baron Pierre De Caters	France
Alessandro Anzani	Italy
Ambroise Goupy	France
Armand Zipfel	France
J.C. Moore-Brabazon	England
George Cockburn	England
Henri Rougier	France



Competitions

Prix de la Vitesse (fastest three laps: 30km; ₣10,000)

Prix du Tour de Piste (fastest single lap; ₣7,000)

Prix des Passagers (₣10,000)

Prix de l'Altitude (₣7,000)

Grand Prix de la Champagne (duration; ₣50,000)

Coupe Internationale d'Aviation Gordon-Bennett (fastest two laps: 20km; ₣25,000)

2,462.6 km flown!

Half-million paid attendance!

GRANDE SEMAINE D'AVIATION DE CHAMPAGNE (Journée du 29 Août)
Aspect des Tribunes pendant la dernière journée



Phototypé J. Bienaimé, Reims

Librairie



19



Leon Delagrange Bleriot XI "16"

23 May 1909
Official Opening, Port-Aviation

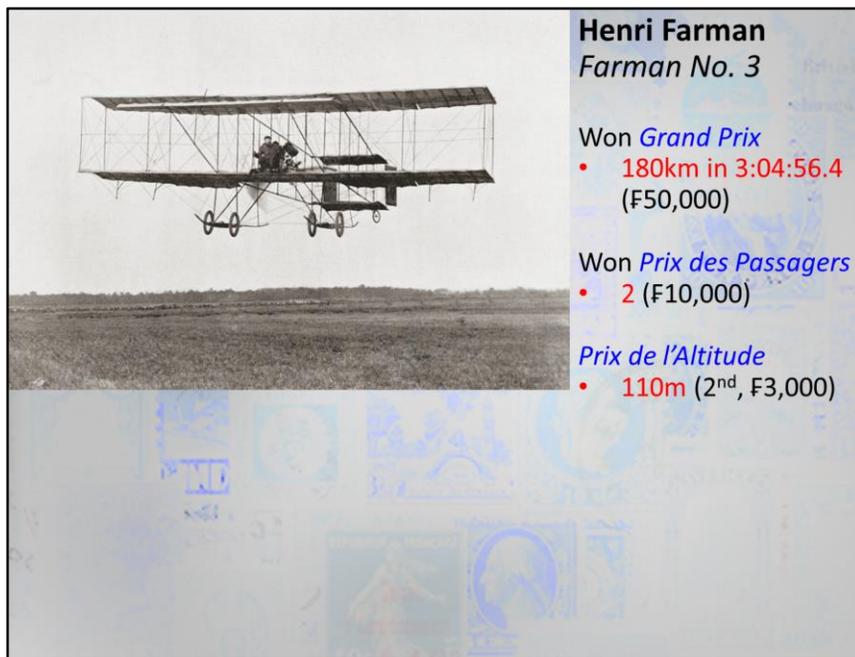
Grand Prix
• 29 Aug: 50km (8th)

Prix du Tour de Piste
• 29 Aug: 11:03.6 (10th)

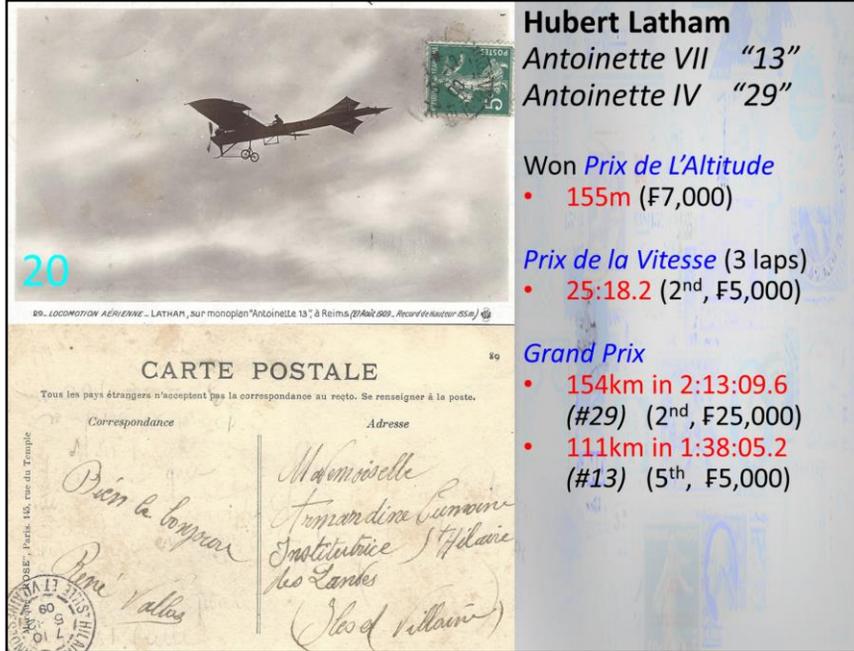
"Reims, 29.VIII.09
...aviators are elegant and at
the same time two dirigibles
under way with much security.

...beau temps en Champagne et
beaucoup de plaisir"

CDS:
30 - 8 09 MARNE



Card not in collection, but image from Grande Semaine D'Aviation, 1909.



Hubert Latham
 Antoinette VII "13"
 Antoinette IV "29"

Won *Prix de L'Altitude*

- 155m (F7,000)

Prix de la Vitesse (3 laps)

- 25:18.2 (2nd, F5,000)

Grand Prix

- 154km in 2:13:09.6 (#29) (2nd, F25,000)
- 111km in 1:38:05.2 (#13) (5th, F5,000)

20

89. LOCOMOTION AERIERE - LATHAM, sur monoplan "Antoinette 13", à Reims, (21 Mai 1909, Record de hauteur 155m)

CARTE POSTALE

Tous les pays étrangers n'acceptent pas la correspondance au recto. Se renseigner à la poste.

Correspondance

Adresse

Bien la Soyons
 Rome Valles

Monsieur
 Fernand de la Cour
 Institutrice St Helene
 des Landes
 (Isle de Villaine)

100, rue de Valenciennes, Paris 10^e, rue de Valenciennes





Louis Bleriot XII "22"

Won *Prix du Tour de Piste*
(fastest single lap; F7,000)
28 Aug 1909: 7:47.8

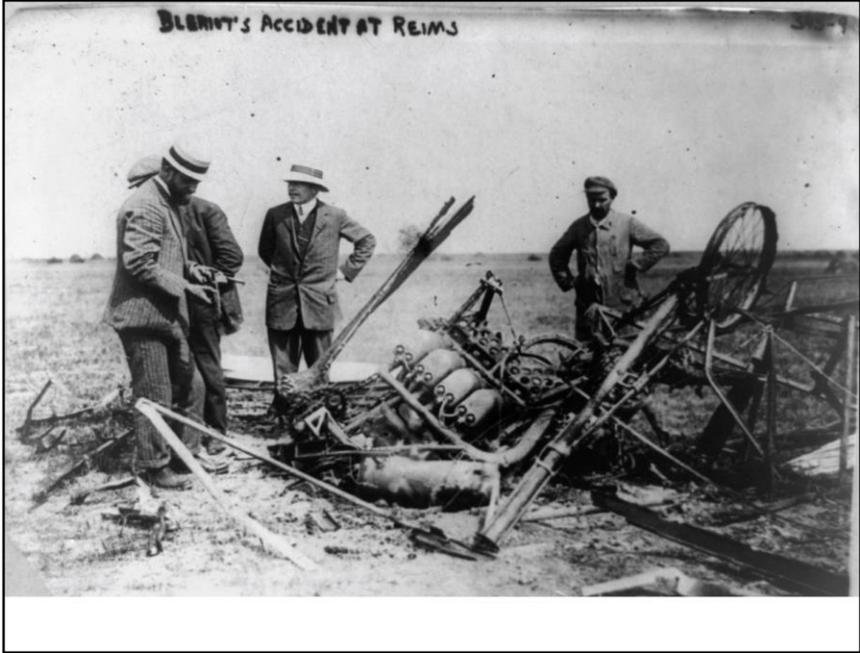
Gordon Bennett Cup (2 laps)
Fastest lap, but 2nd place
finish.

Prix de la Vitesse (3 laps)
Crashed 2nd lap



CDS:
BETHENY AVIATION MARNE
26 -8 09

"What a misfortune lays the distance away from here... I admire the prowess of Bleriot, Latham, and Curtiss..."





**Glenn Curtiss
Reims Racer**

Won *Prix de la Vitesse*

- 23:29 (F10,000)

Prix du Tour de Piste

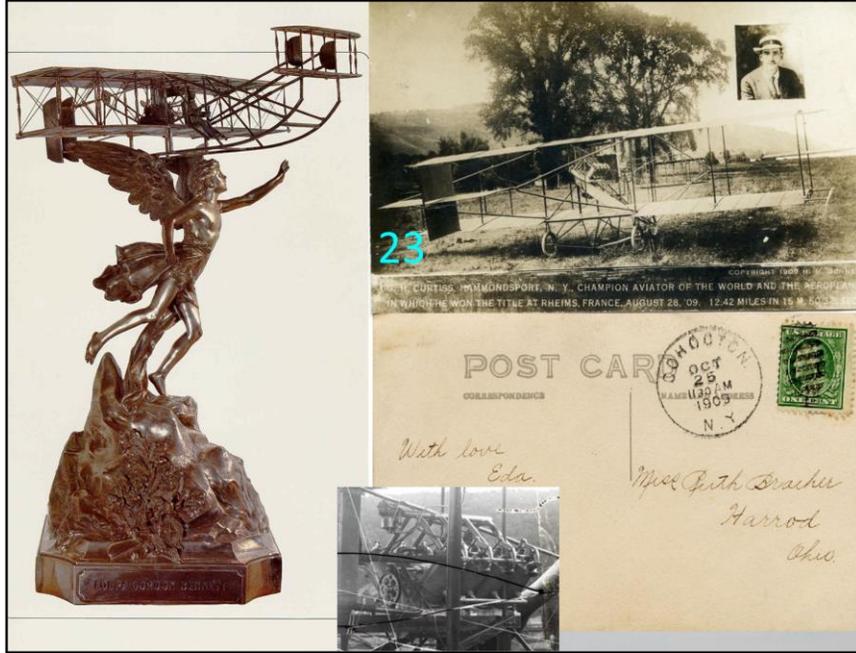
- 29 Aug 1909: 7:49.2
(2nd to Bleriot by 1.4 seconds, F3,000)



Won *Gordon Bennett Cup*

- 15:50.4 (beats Bleriot by 6 seconds, F25,000)

- Secures first *Gordon Bennett Trophy*, setting 1910 venue (US)



Left: the Gordon Bennett trophy, Wright Flyer perched on top. A celebratory card, mailed shortly after Curtiss' triumphant return to the US. Depicts the Reims Racer in high resolution. Inset shows the water-cooled V8 engine from the front.

Sources

thefirstairraces.net

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