

QUIET BIRDMEN



PINEHURST NC HANGAR

QB MEMBER PROFILES

PROFILE NUMBER 6

Leonard J. Povey

QB #3192

Hangar: Charlotte (CLT)



QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey



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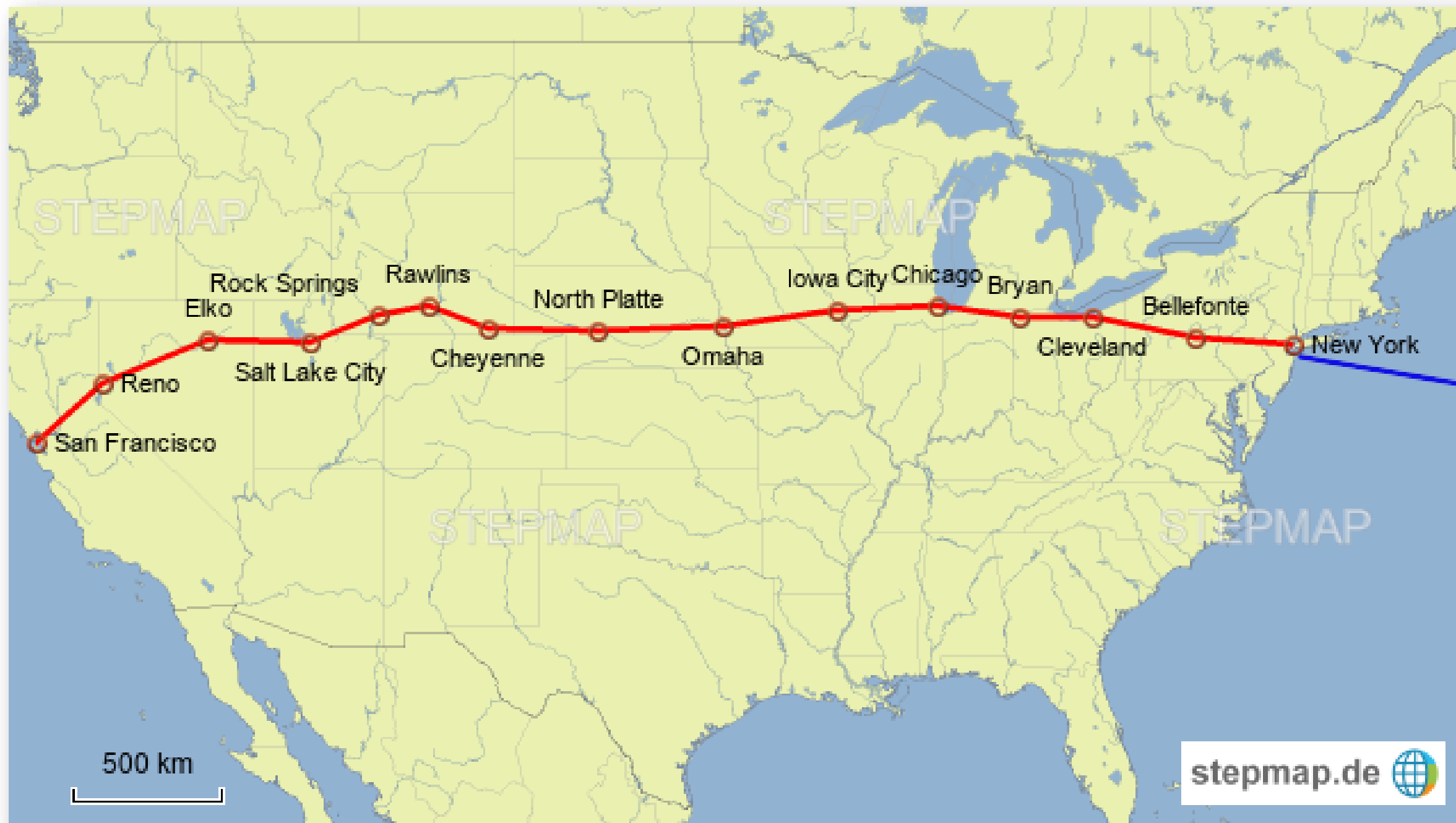


Billy Mitchell at Selfridge Field, Michigan, 1922. Possibly a Thomas-Morse MB-3 fighter.



- Born **Leonard James Povey** February 8th, 1904 in Nashua, New Hampshire to **William N. Povey** and **Bertha McCormick**. In 1937, at age 33, he married **Edith Thompson**, born 1907 in St. Louis, Missouri. They had no children.
- His **aviation career began in 1922 at age 18** when he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Service.
- Although only a sergeant, Povey obtained permission from **Billy Mitchell** (QB #675) to take flight training, learning to fly under **Lt. E.H. Barksdale** (QB #543) at Mitchel Field on Long Island. (image of him left, below).
- While serving with Barksdale from 1922-1925, Povey assisted him in laying out a model of the **first transcontinental airway** between New York, Seattle, and San Francisco.

First Transcontinental Air Route



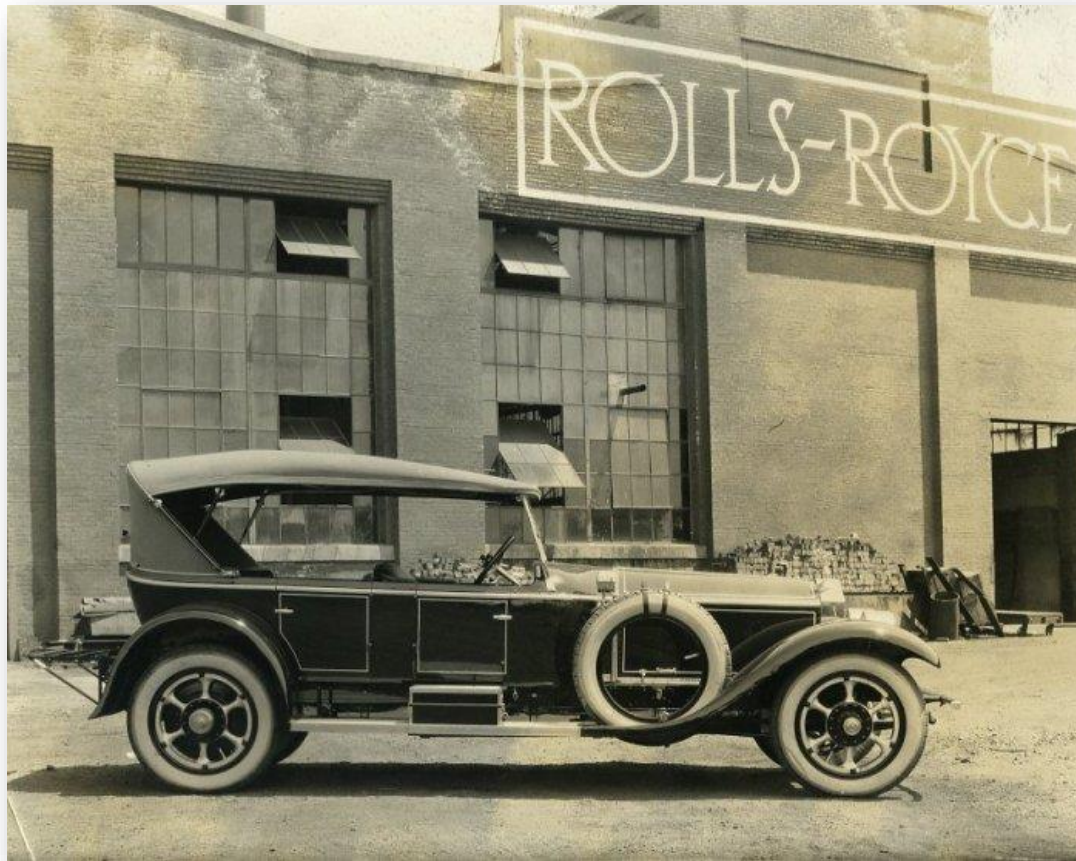
*The earliest transcontinental airmail route, established in **1920**, used a combination of **day flights and night trains**. Coast-to-coast delivery took nearly **four days**. The first test-service to include night flights began in **1924**, cutting total journey time to **33 hours**. That trip, from New York to San Francisco, required **15 stops and 6 changes of pilots and planes**.*

Eugene Hoy Barksdale (QB #543)



On August 11, 1926 Barksdale was testing a Douglas O-2 observation airplane for spin characteristics over McCook Field in Dayton, Ohio, and did not recover from a flat spin. While parachuting out of the plane, his parachute caught in the wing's brace wires, and he went down with the plane. He was buried with full military honors in Arlington Natl. Cemetery in Arlington, VA. Barksdale AFB in Shreveport, LA is named in his honor.

QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey



- Povey **left the Army** in 1925 and took a job as a test driver with the Springfield, MA division of **Rolls-Royce of America**. Rolls-Royce built cars there from 1921 until 1931.
- **1925-1931:** While working full-time for Rolls-Royce, he barnstormed with a **Curtiss Flying Boat** on various lakes in New York and New England. (image left: a Curtiss MF flying boat moored in Wolfeboro Bay, Lake Winnepesaukee, NH, 1925.)
- **1930-1932:** Test Pilot for the **Granville Brothers Aircraft** company in Springfield, MA, makers of the famous Gee Bee line of planes.

*1931
Gee Bee
racer.*

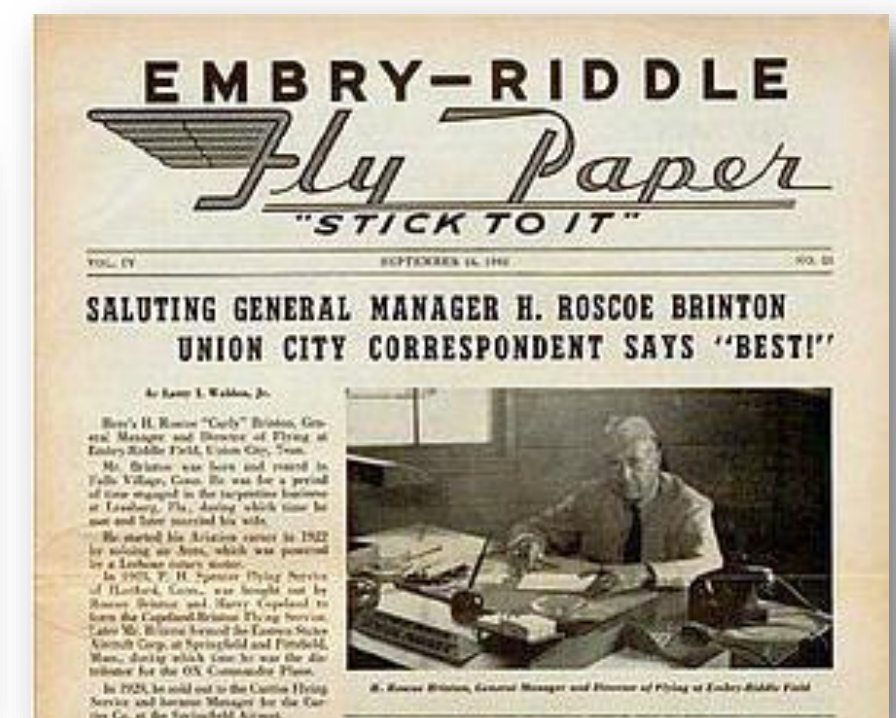
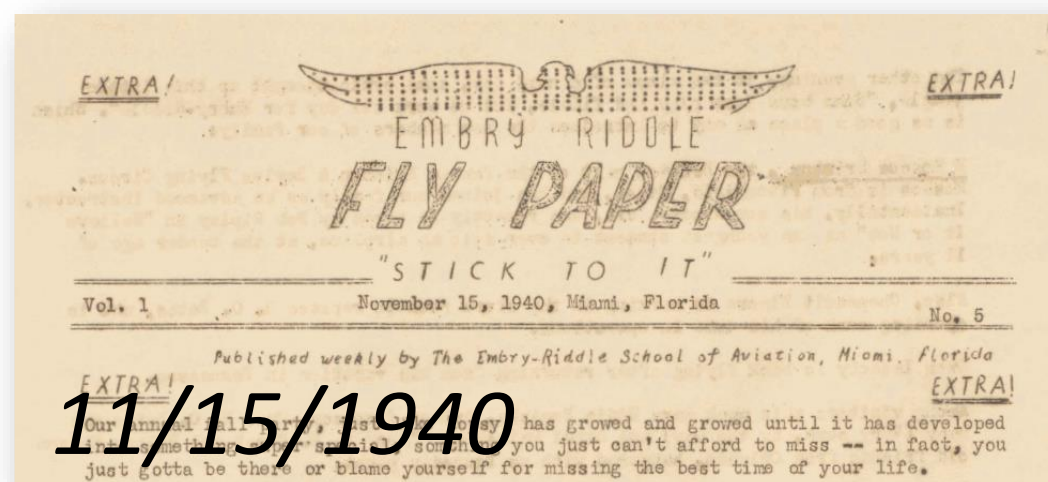


1925 Rolls-Royce New Phantom



QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey

- **1930-1932:** Povey was also an aerobatic exhibition pilot with the **Brinton-Bayles Flying Circus**. Named after **H. Roscoe Brinton** (QB #2505) and **Lowell R. Bayles** (QB #2406). Bayles was the winner of the 1931 Thompson Trophy flying the **Gee Bee Model Z**. He was **killed** in December 1931 during an attempt at the landplane speed record when the **Gee Bee Model Z** he was flying crashed at over 300 miles per hour mph.
- Seen in the November 15th, 1940 issue of the **Embry-Riddle Fly Paper**: “**H. Roscoe Brinton**, the Brinton part of the famous Brinton & Bayles Flying Circus. Roscoe is from Pittsfield, Mass., and has joined our family as an **advanced instructor**. Incidentally, his son Roscoe, Jr., was recently featured by Bob Ripley in "Believe It or Not" as the **youngest student to ever solo an airplane**, at the tender age of 11 years.”



QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey

- **1933:** “Len” joined the **National Air Races** flying with **Wiley Post** (QB #3914) as well as other notable aviators. It was sometime during his stint as a barnstormer that Povey earned the nickname “**Upside Down Povey**”, an appropriate nickname because he thrilled the spectators by flying his plane upside down.



Wiley Post with his record-setting Lockheed Vega “Winnie Mae” in 1933.



Len Povey flies inverted over Miami in a WACO ATO Taperwing, early 1930s. Note Goodyear blimp in lower right.

QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey

- **1934:** Povey's aerobatics impressed spectators at the sixth annual **All-America Air Races** held on January 11-13 in Miami. Among them were representatives of the new Cuban dictator Fulgencio **Batista** y Zaldívar.



QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey



- **1934:** Povey was taken to **Cuba** to meet Batista where he accepted the offer to organize and build the Cuban Air Force. Povey was put in charge of training and operations and in addition, was **Batista's personal pilot.**
- With the fall of the prior government of President Machado ended the era of **Captain Rosenham Beam**, later USAF Brigadier General, originally from Bardstown, KY. In January 1928 Beam became commander of the U.S. Air Corps Mission to Cuba, with station at Havana, where he remained until July 1931. Among his many assignments, Beam supervised the training of the **82nd Airborne Division** before it went to Sicily.
- Povey's **first priority** was to **save the remnants of the Air Corp**, which consisted of a small number of Vought O2U Corsairs, Boeing De Havilland (Airco) DH 4M-1, Buffalo Consolidated PT-3 Husky, Curtiss P-6S Hawk, and WACO models 9 and 10.
- Every **September 4th**, the anniversary of Batista's revolution, Povey would put on a flying demonstration. On the fourth anniversary of the revolution, he awed the spectators by writing in the sky "**Viva Batista Para Cuba.**"

Cuban Air Corps in 1934



Vought O2U Corsair



Curtiss P-6S in Cuban markings



Boeing De Havilland DH 4M-1



Buffalo Consolidated PT-3 Husky

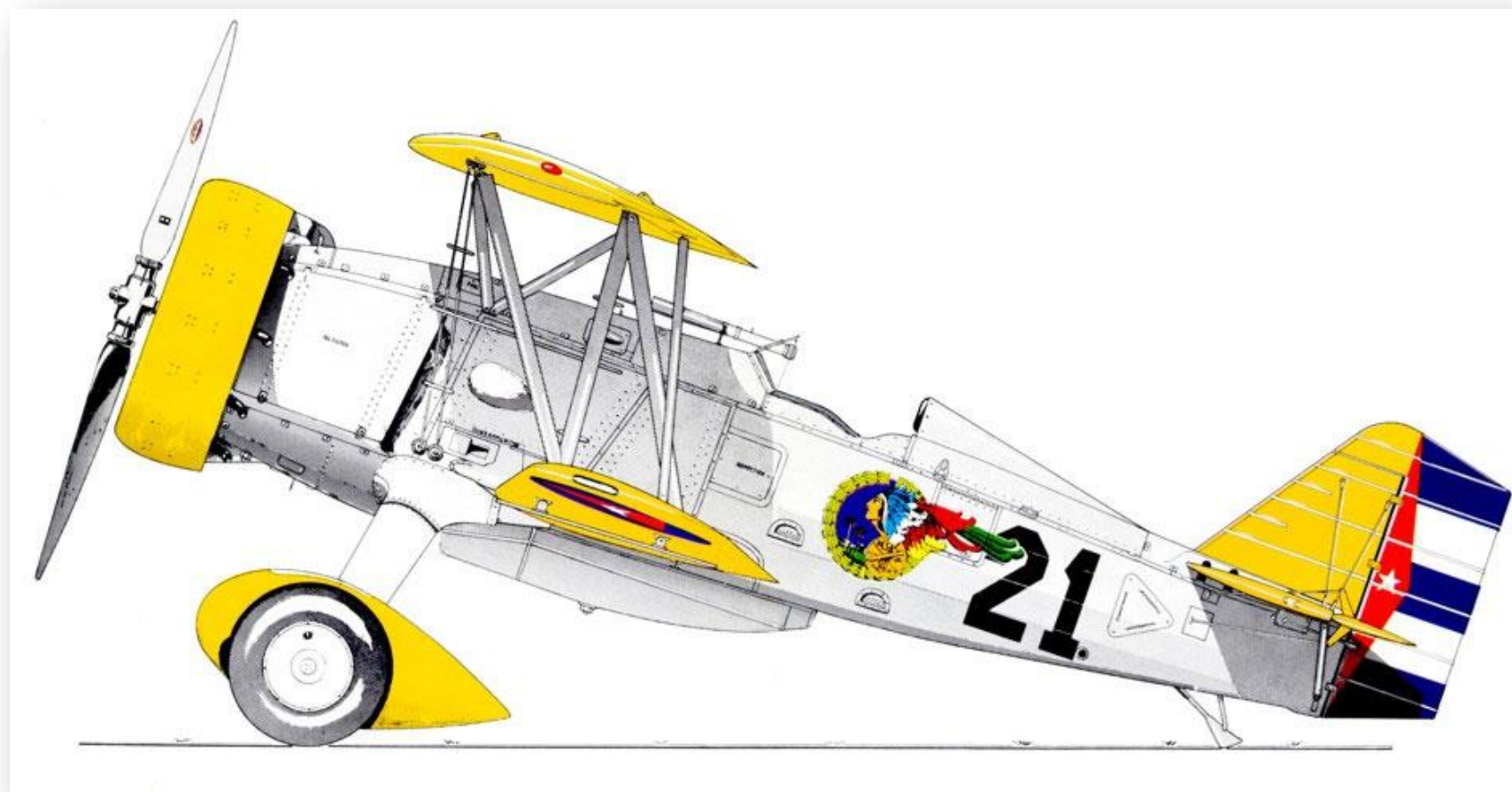


WACO Model 9



WACO Model 10

Cuban Air Corps in 1934



Curtiss Hawk II in Cuban markings.



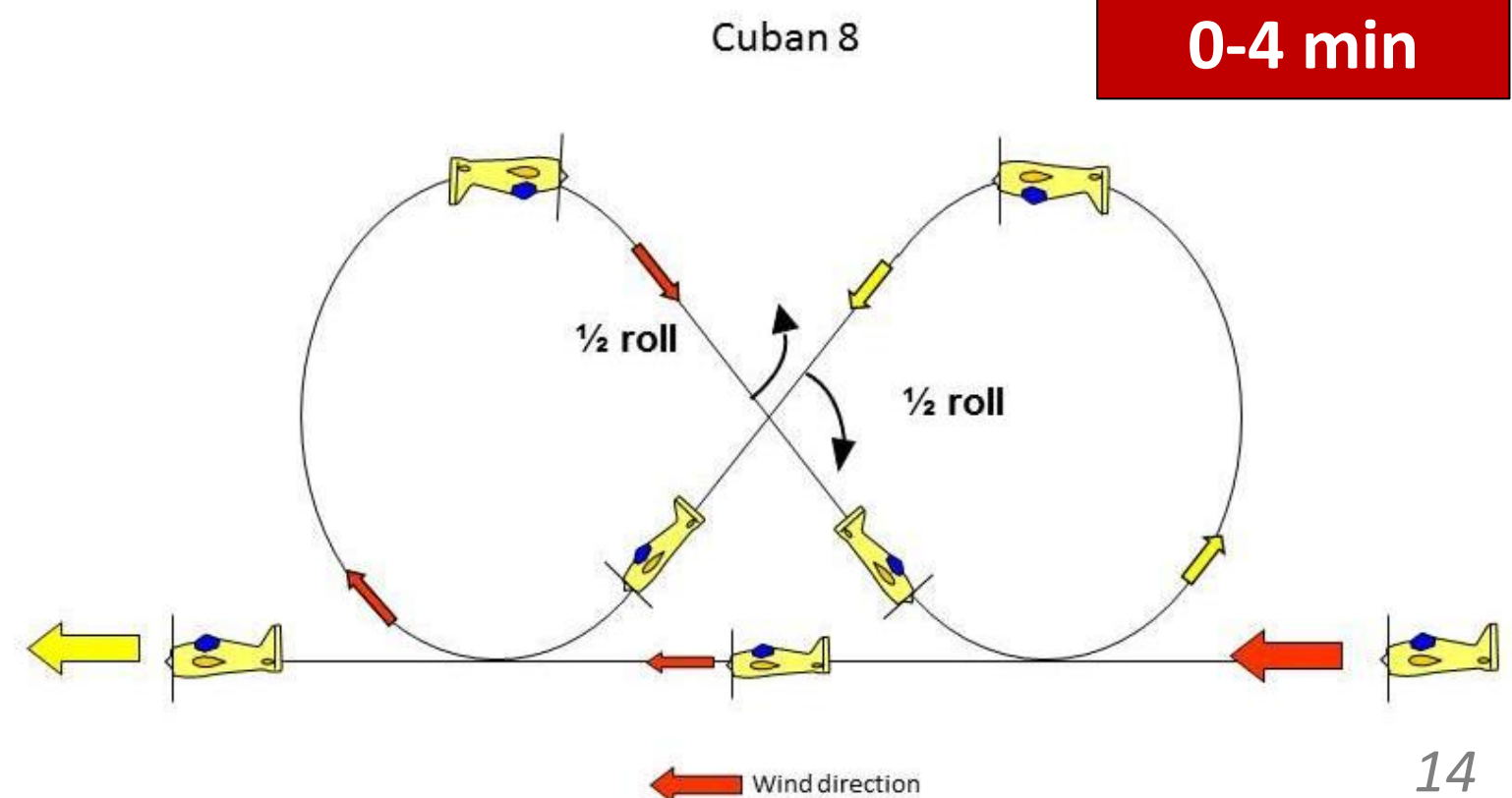
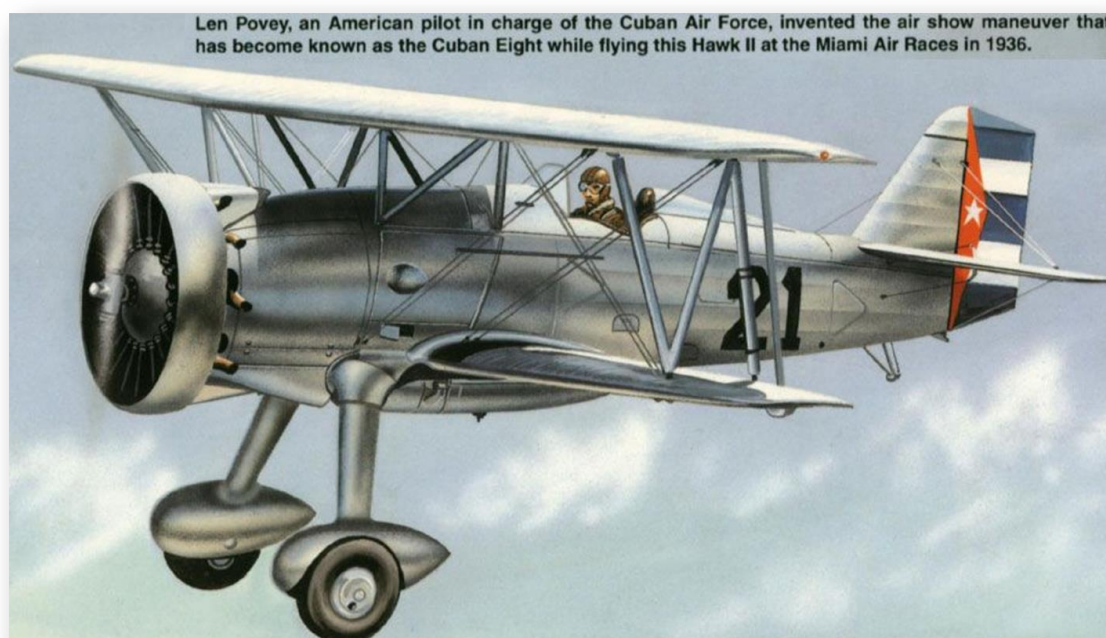
Curtiss Hawk II with markings from **Ernst Udet** (QB #4066).

QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey



- As **technical advisor**, Povey built the Cuban Air Force **from scratch**. Starting with fifteen candidates, five made it through ground school and began actual flight training.
- Initially, Povey conducted both **ground school** and **flight training** himself until he had enough trained and qualified men to help with training.
- While serving in the Cuban Air Force, Povey **accidentally invented an aerobatic maneuver** while performing in the All-American Air Maneuvers in 1937. According to Povey, “I was supposed to be doing a double snap roll on top of a loop. But my crate got going too fast to snap. I had to do something - so I laid the ship on her side and did a half roll at each end of a loop.” Upon landing, the judges [which included **Jimmy Doolittle** (QB #1578)] asked Povey what that maneuver was supposed to be. He thought fast, responding, “**that’s a Cuban Eight.**”

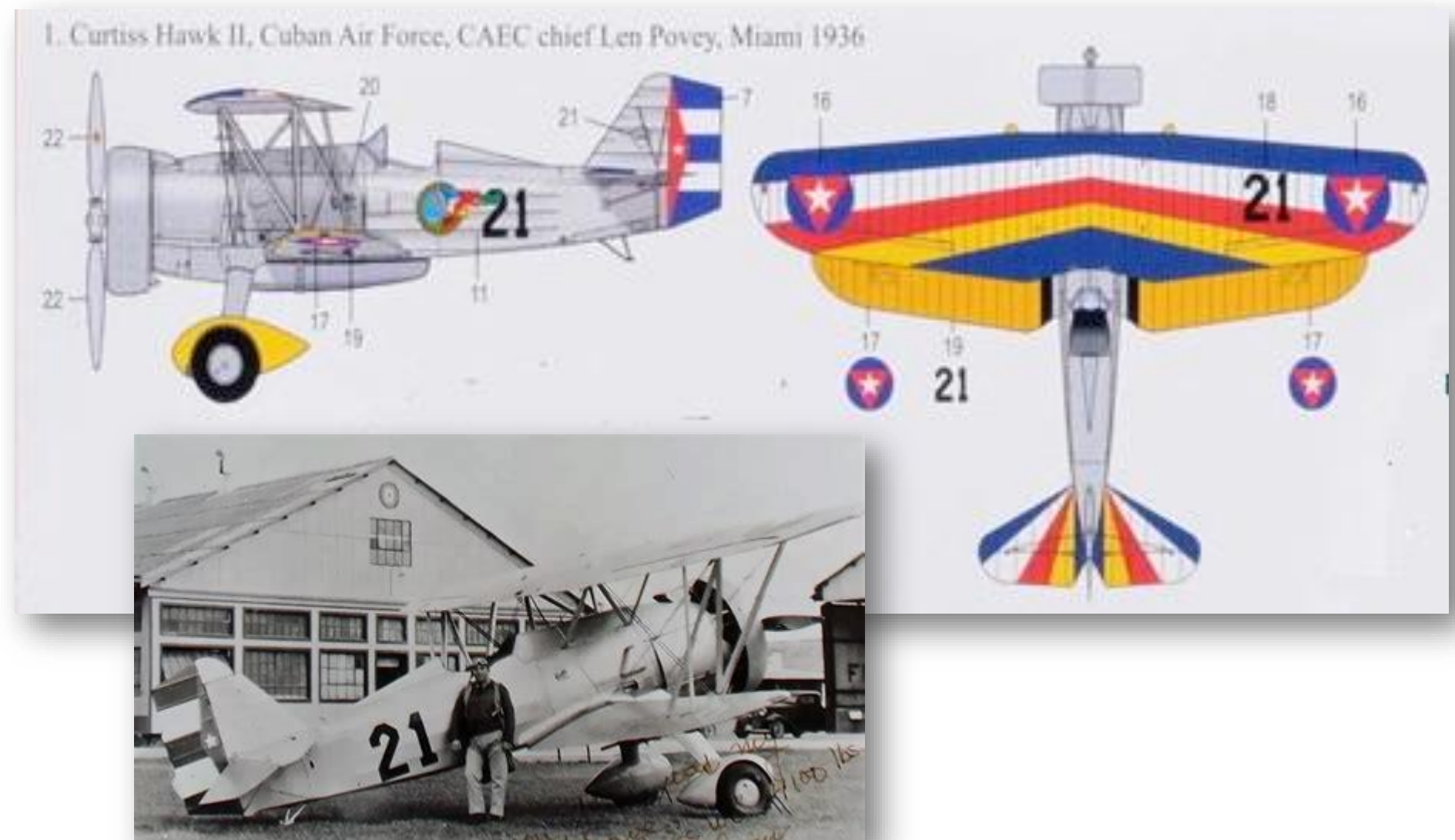
PLAY AUDIO
0-4 min



QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey



- In **August of 1934** the **communists** announced a demonstration in the center of the city of Havana, even without the government permission. Colonel Batista, then Army Commander, ordered the Air Corp to **scare the demonstrators** to which Povey armed his plane with **2 demolition bombs** of 120 pounds (only for effects because **they did not have any detonators**).
- Descending from a height of 4000', he flew over the heads of the communists at the **Prado Avenue** in a bombing pass. When the communist saw the plane they **panicked and ran with fear in all directions** with their signs, flags, & noise-makers.



QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey



- **1938:** Len Povey **left Cuba**. Upon returning to the United States, he was appointed **aeronautical and flight test engineering inspector** for the Bureau of Commerce.
- **1940:** Povey was appointed **chief of the Airman Unit of the CAA** and **civilian pilot consultant** to the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Air.
- **1941:** Povey became Vice-President of **Embry-Riddle School of Aviation** where he was in charge of all four of the flight training schools operated by Embry-Riddle. (Paul Riddle and Len Povey had been friends for years.) Three of the schools trained pilots for the United States, one trained pilots for Great Britain. In all, the four schools combined, **trained over 19,000 students**.



QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey

- **1944-1952:** Povey worked as manager of military sales for **Fairchild Aircraft Division**. While there he helped develop training aircraft for the Air Force and Navy and demonstrated the planes at military training facilities. He also was responsible for demonstrating the **C-119** military transport to the Air Force.



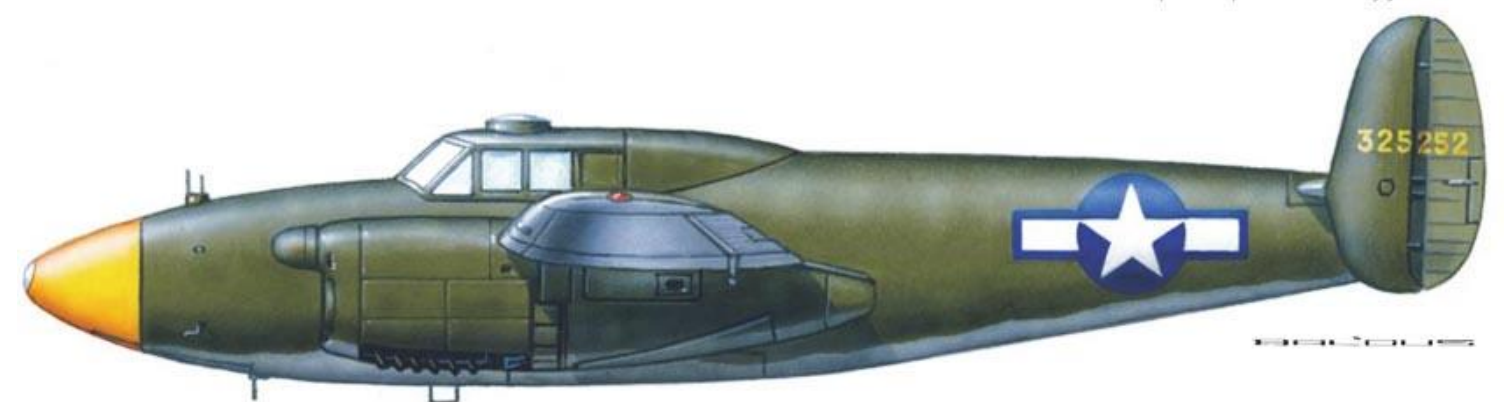
Fairchild 24 Argus



Fairchild C-119



*Fairchild AT-21 Gunner, built in **Burlington, NC***



Fairchild BQ-3 Drone

QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey

- **1952:** Povey left Fairchild to join **Mackey Airlines** and became executive vice-president in 1953. “Colonel Joe”, USAF Col. Joseph C. Mackey (QB #1954A), a former barnstormer, formed **Mackey Airlines** in Fort Lauderdale in 1946. The original Mackey Airlines was acquired by **Eastern Air Lines** in 1967.



Len Povey, John McKay, and Willis Tyson chuckle together at the 1940 Christmas party at Embry-Riddle. Paul Riddle partnered with McKay in 1932 to form the Embry-Riddle School of Aviation in Miami.



QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey

- **1967:** After the Mackey-Eastern merger, Povey became vice president and general manager of **Eastern Aviation Services** and was eventually inducted into the **OX5 Aviation Pioneers Hall of Fame**, honoring all who flew **Curtiss OX-5** powered aircraft such as the Jenny.
- **1991:** Towards the end of his long aviation career, Povey served as director of public relations for **Stevens Aviation** in Greenville, SC. Today the company is known as **Stevens Aerospace and Defense Systems**.



***STEVENS AEROSPACE AND
DEFENSE SYSTEMS***



QB Profiles – Len Povey

FAREWELL TO TWO MORE AVIATION PIONEERS

We have just learned of the passing of two aviation pioneers. Bettie Lund died on 6/25/84 in a Mesa, Arizona hospital after a bout with cancer. Leonard James "Len" Povey passed away in his sleep on 9/26/84 in his home in Highlands, North Carolina.

Bettie and her husband Freddie, who preceded her in death, were noted exhibition flyers in the late 1920s and early '30s and both competed in various racing, aerobatic and deadstick landing events at the National Air Races during that period. Bettie first made a name for herself when she set a world record for women by executing 67 barrel rolls in 28 minutes.

Len Povey was a celebrated aerobatic pilot who had won a number of international trophies and titles. He was credited with originating the Cuban 8 maneuver when he performed it at the Miami All-American Races in the mid-thirties.

In 1934 he was hired by the Cuban government to train the fledgling Cuban Air Force. When WW II broke out he returned to the U.S. and became head of all instructors in the Civilian Pilot Training Programs. Later he was placed in charge of Embry-Riddle's flight schools which trained 19,000 cadets during WW II. Following the war, Povey was named manager of military sales for Fairchild Aircraft.

Len Povey (EAA 99145) was one of the special guests at Oshkosh '75 and honored as an "Aviation Great".

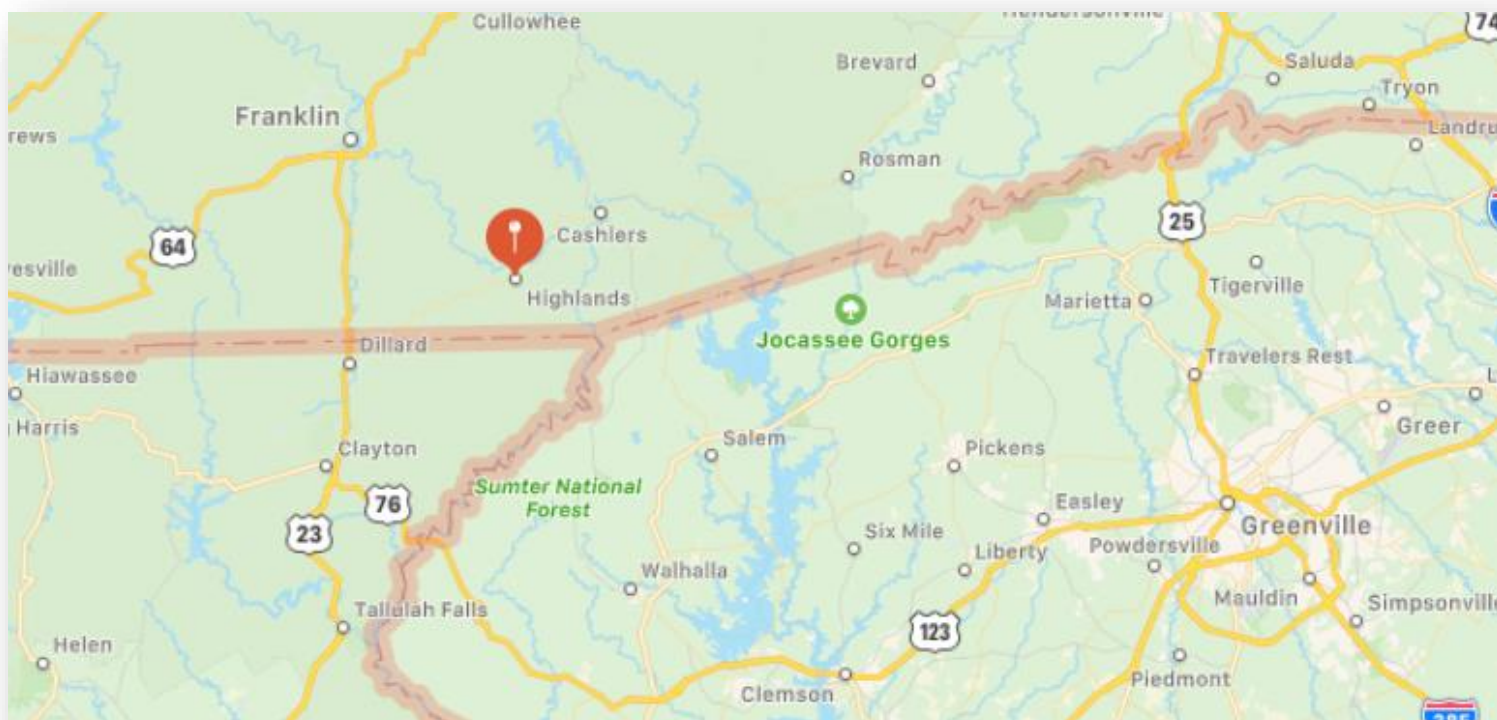
To the family and friends of Bettie Lund and Len Povey, we extend our deepest sympathy.



QB Profiles – Leonard J. Povey



- Len Povey died September 29th, 1984 at age 80 in **Highlands, North Carolina.**
- He is buried in Highlands Memorial Park, Highlands, NC.
- His wife **Edith died in 1996** and is buried alongside her husband of 47 years.
- **What a pity** that his gravestone has no mention of his many important contributions to aviation!
- **Can QB change this ?**



CAVU FOREVER BROTHER QB



Thank You



QUIET BIRDMEN



PINEHURST NC HANGAR

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