

Beyond the Sunset #6

By George Fuller

21 November 2000 will be the 217th anniversary of the world's first manned balloon flight. That day in 1783, the old clock over the entrance on Place d'Armes of the Vieux séminaire de Saint-Sulpice was indicating the time to passing Montrealers. Possibly in the secret garden behind, a paternal uncle of the brothers Montgolfier was relaxing in the fading greenery of late autumn, unaware of the event that would make the family name famous.

Etienne Montgolfier was a priest, superior of the Sulpician seminary and vicar general. At the time he was probably thinking more about the representatives that had been sent to London to try to persuade the British authorities to allow the appointment of a Catholic bishop in Montréal and the immigration to Canada of foreign priests. It would not happen in his lifetime. He died in Montréal in August 1791, in his 80th year.

In preparing the column for the Summer 2000 Bulletin, a discovery was made which deserves your attention. For several years, Montréal was home to the former editors of two of the world's best aeronautical magazines. They were both prominent in the International Civil Aviation Organization. In August 1945, the first session of the Interim Council of the Provisional I.C.A.O. elected Dr. Edward Pearson Warner, then vice-chairman of the United States Civil Aeronautics Board, as president of the Council. The representative of France on the Council was Henri Bouché.

Now "Aviation Week and Space Technology", the magazine began in 1916 as "Aviation and Aeronautical Engineering" in New York. Dr. Warner was its editor from 1929 to 1934. He had been assistant secretary, aeronautics, U.S. Navy Department, from 1926 to 1929. The Society of Automotive Engineers had its annual meeting at the Chateau Frontenac in Québec City in May 1928. He presented a paper on the standardization of aircraft parts. Dr. Warner travelled to and from the meeting in a U.S. Navy Vought Corsair amphibian biplane flown by a naval Commander. Their Canadian itinerary included stops at Canadian Vickers in Maisonneuve and at the R.C.A.F. Station at Shirley's Bay, Ottawa.

Henri Bouché had been editor of "L'Aéronautique". The Paris monthly magazine was published between June 1919 and June 1940. In September 1928, he had been Juan de la Cierva's passenger in the first crossing of the English Channel by a rotating wing aircraft. The Avro-built Cierva autogiro is now in the French Musée de l'Air. He was co-author with Charles Dollfus of "L'Histoire de l'Aéronautique" first published by "L'Illustration" in Paris in 1932. It was revised and republished there during the German occupation of France. Henri Bouché was France's able and respected representative at I.C.A.O. for more than twenty years.



Vought O2U-1



Cierva C.8L Mk.II

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