



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
MARINE CORPS HISTORICAL CENTER  
WASHINGTON NAVY YARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20374-0580

IN REPLY REFER TO  
5750/1549  
HDH-2/RS  
19 Oct 87

Mrs. Thomas W. Ellison  
P.O. Box 104  
Winnsboro, South Carolina 29180

Dear Mrs. Ellison:

This is in response to your recent letter requesting maps and photographs of aircraft pertaining to the career of Marine Lieutenant General William O. Brice.

We are enclosing biographical information on General Brice, copies of photos of aircraft with official Marine Corps negative numbers listed, copies of maps of the Solomon Islands and the Pacific, and two group photos with General Brice depicted.

A collection of historical maps is held in the Personal Papers Collection of the Center. You should contact the Personal Papers Curator at the address below if you desire any further assistance with respect to maps.

Mr. J. Michael Miller  
Curator, Personal Papers Collection  
Code HMD-1, Bldg. 58, WNY  
Washington, D.C. 20374-0580

We hope this information will prove useful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Danny J. Crawford".

DANNY J. CRAWFORD  
Head, Reference Section  
History and Museums Division

Encl:

- (1) Biog Info - Gen Brice
- (2) Copies of Aircraft Photos
- (3) Photos (2)
- (4) Fact Sheet: MC Audio-Visual Materials



LIEUTENANT GENERAL WILLIAM O. BRICE, USMC

Lieutenant General William Oscar Brice, a Marine officer since 1921 and an aviator since 1924, is a veteran of the Korean conflict, the World War II fight for the Solomon Islands and pre-war expeditionary duty in Haiti and China. He is now serving at Pearl Harbor as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, after more than three years at Marine Corps Headquarters, Washington, D. C., as Director of Marine Aviation, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps for Air and Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Marine Aviation.

The general served in Korea as Assistant Commander of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing from April to October, 1951. In World War II, when the Marines were fighting at Guadalcanal in America's first offensive against Japan, he commanded all U. S. Army, Navy, Marine and Royal New Zealand Air Force search, bombing and torpedo planes based on that island. He also headed Marine Aircraft Group 14 during its support of the New Georgia and Bougainville invasions and directed all Solomons-based Army, Navy, Marine and New Zealand fighter operations against Rabaul, Japan's biggest base in the Southwest Pacific.

He won the Distinguished Service Medal at Guadalcanal, the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" as head of the Fighter Command, the Air Medal for combat flights in the Solomons between December, 1942, and February, 1944, and the Order of the British Empire (with rank of Honorary Commander, Military Division) for his service with the New Zealand Air Force. In addition, he earned the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V" in the final months of the war as Chief of Staff, Air, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.

Born December 10, 1898, in Columbia, S. C., General Brice attended Mt. Zion Institute at Winnsboro, S. C., from 1913 to 1917, then served in the Army in the latter part of World War I. After the war he resumed his education, graduating from The Citadel at Charleston, S. C., in 1921. On September 25th of that year he reported for active duty as a Marine second lieutenant and was assigned to the Company Officers School at Quantico, Va. Graduating from the school in July, 1922, he was stationed at the Marine Barracks, Parris Island, S. C., until May, 1923, when he joined the 1st Marine Brigade in Haiti. He returned from that country in February, 1924, to enter flight training at Pensacola, Fla., where he was designated an aviator that August.

In June, 1925, after further instruction at Pensacola and service with Observation Squadron 3 at Quantico, the general began another tour of overseas duty, this time with Scouting Squadron 1 on Guam. From Guam he was ordered to China in April, 1927, when most of the squadron was sent there to help protect Americans and other foreigners during the Chinese civil war. The squadron was withdrawn to the Philippines in May while

arrangements for a flying field were made with the Chinese government, and the next month it returned to China to begin operating from Hsin Ho in support of the 3rd Marine Brigade.

Returning to the United States in December, 1927, General Brice was assigned the following month to Fighter Squadron 9-M at Quantico where he remained until October, 1931. Then, on November 2nd of that year he reported aboard the aircraft carrier "Lexington" in command of Scouting Squadron 15-M, which thus began its service as one of the first two Marine squadrons to be based on Navy carriers. (The other unit, Scouting Squadron 14-M, boarded the "Saratoga" the same day.)

The general remained on the "Lexington" until January, 1933, and that June, after six months at San Diego, Calif., he returned to Quantico. There, during the next three years, he served on aviation duty, completed the Junior Course and was a member of the War Plans Section. He entered the Army Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Ala., in August, 1936, and upon graduation in June of the following year, returned to Quantico to serve as Executive Officer and later, Commander, of Scouting Squadron 1. After that he was an instructor at Pensacola from June, 1939, until August, 1941, when he went back to Quantico once more, this time as Operations Officer of Marine Aircraft Group 11.

With that group General Brice moved to San Diego in December, 1941, and there, in March, 1942, he assumed command of Marine Aircraft Group 12. He headed that unit until September, 1942, when he rejoined Marine Aircraft Group 11 as its commander, and the following month he sailed with it (via New Caledonia) for the New Hebrides Islands, where the group began feeding planes and pilots into Guadalcanal. In December, 1942, he moved up to Guadalcanal to take command of Marine Aircraft Group 14 and all the search, bombing and torpedo planes based there, remaining until April, 1943, when he departed for New Zealand with the group.

The general returned to the Solomons with that unit in August, 1943, to support the New Georgia and Bougainville operations. The group became the nucleus of the Solomons Fighter Command, and that October General Brice was assigned additional duties as head of that organization. He relinquished his command of the group in January, 1944, but continued to head the Fighter Command until he returned to the United States that March.

In September, 1944, after service in various capacities at the Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, N. C., General Brice reported to Marine Corps Headquarters, where he served as Executive Officer of the Division of Plans and Policies until June, 1945. The same year he was promoted to brigadier general at the age of

46, which made him the youngest general officer then in the Marine Corps, and that July he arrived in Hawaii to take over as Chief of Staff, Air, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. He held that post until May, 1947, and the following month, returned to Marine Corps Headquarters as Assistant Director of Marine Aviation.

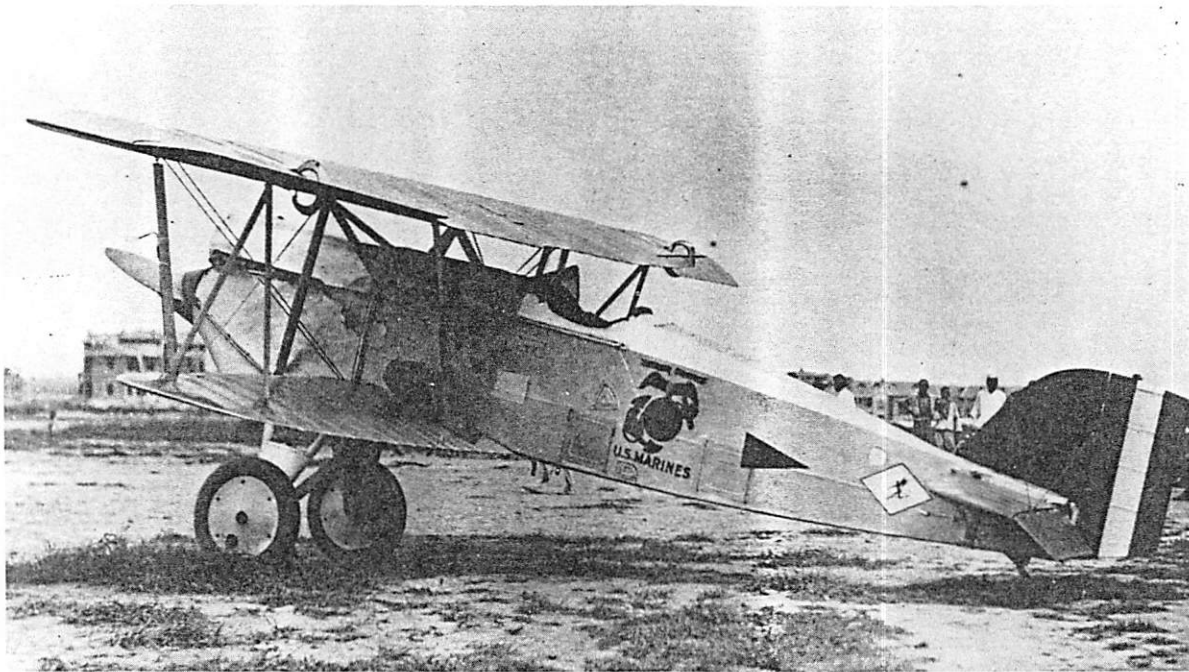
Leaving Headquarters in May, 1949, the general's next tour of duty was at Glenview, Ill., as Commander of Marine Air Reserve Training from that July, until April, 1951, when he left for Korea to become Assistant Commander of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Promoted to major general that August, he returned to Hawaii in October as Deputy Commander, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, serving in that capacity until March, 1952, when he returned to the United States. He became Director of Aviation the following month, and in August, 1953, when that post was elevated to a lieutenant general's billet, he was promoted to his present rank. He left Washington in July, 1955, and assumed his present command on September 9th of that year.

In addition to the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal and Order of the British Empire, General Brice holds the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal with one bronze star; the World War I Victory Medal; the Yangtze Service Medal; the American Defense Service Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal with three bronze stars; the American Area Campaign Medal; the World War II Victory Medal; the National Defense Service Medal; the Korean Service Medal with two bronze stars; the United Nations Service Medal and the Korean Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon.

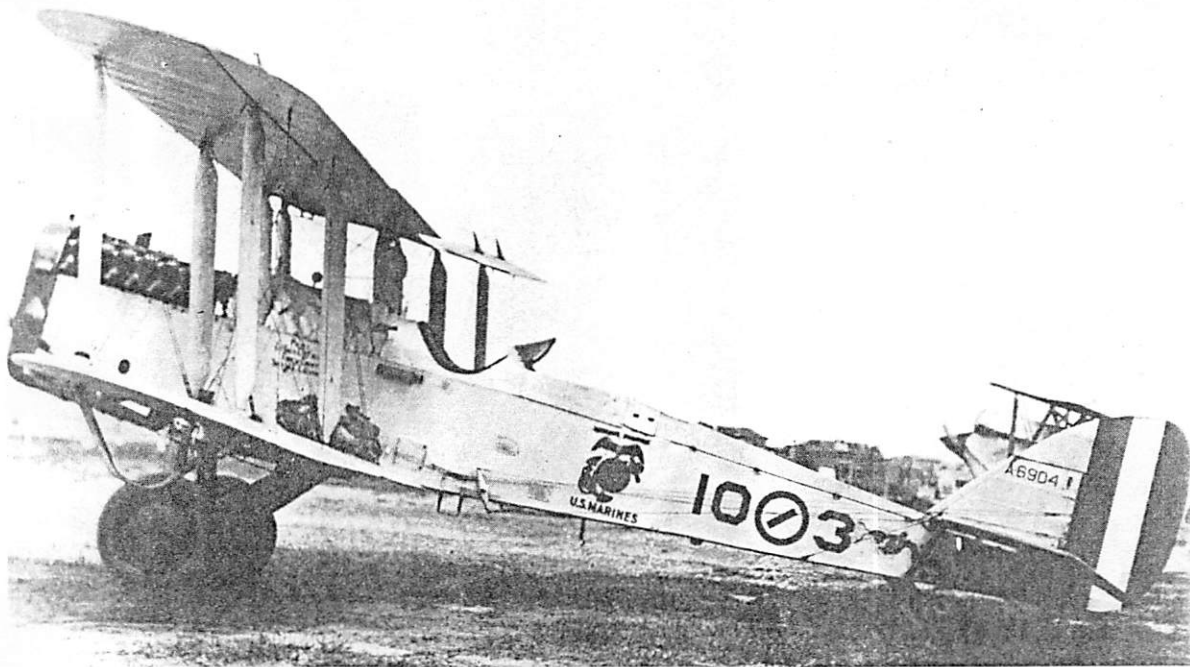
The general and his wife, the former Rebekah Jennings, of Winnsboro, have a daughter, Mrs. Charles A. Brown, of Bryn Mawr, Pa.

-USMC-

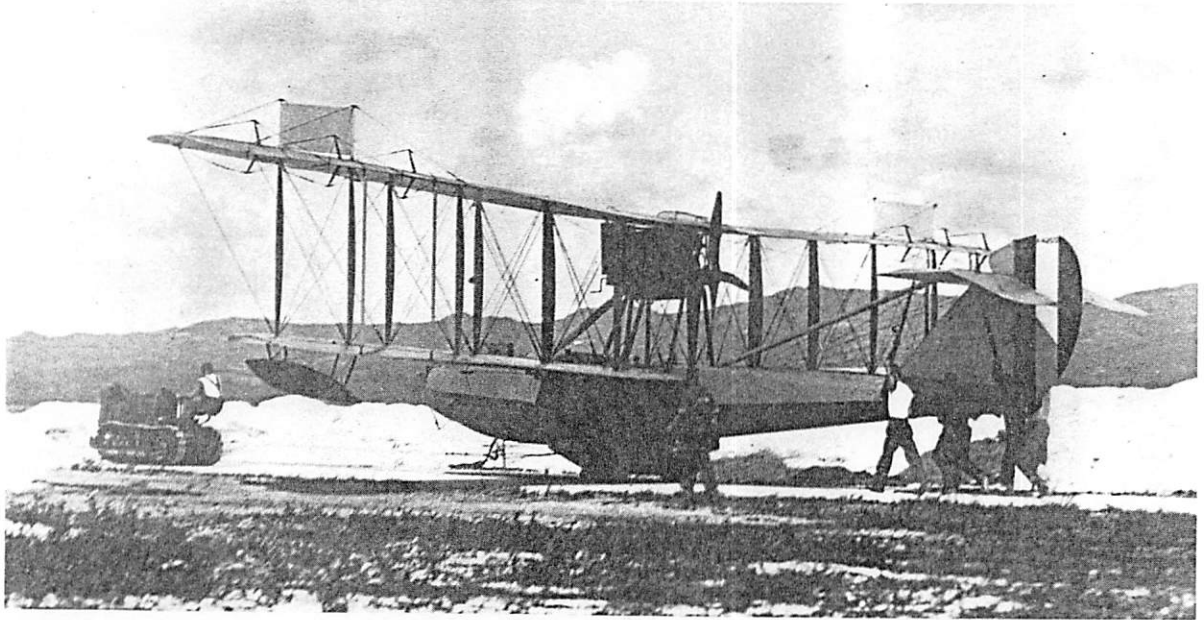
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Sept. 16, 1955



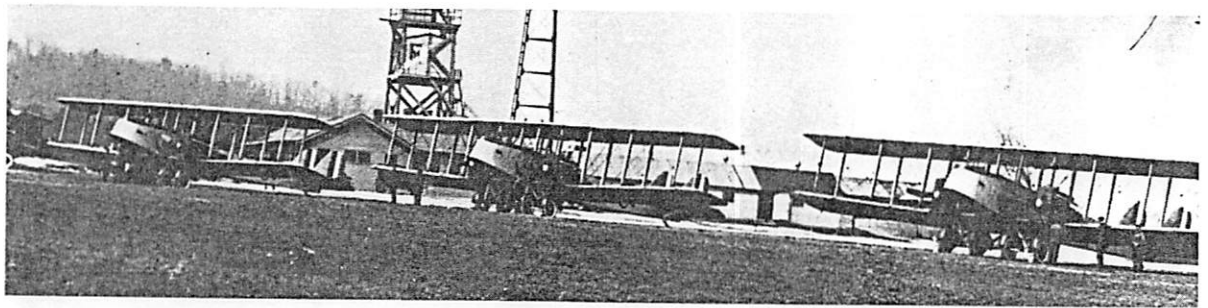
*A Boeing FB-1 fighter on the Marine landing strip at Tientsin in 1927. Aircraft such as this supported Butler's brigade in China. (Marine Corps Photo 514929).*



*One of the O2B-1s of the observation squadron in China. When first formed, this unit was numbered VO-5M, but by late 1927 had been redesignated VO-10M, as the side markings of this aircraft indicate. (Marine Corps Photo 514928).*



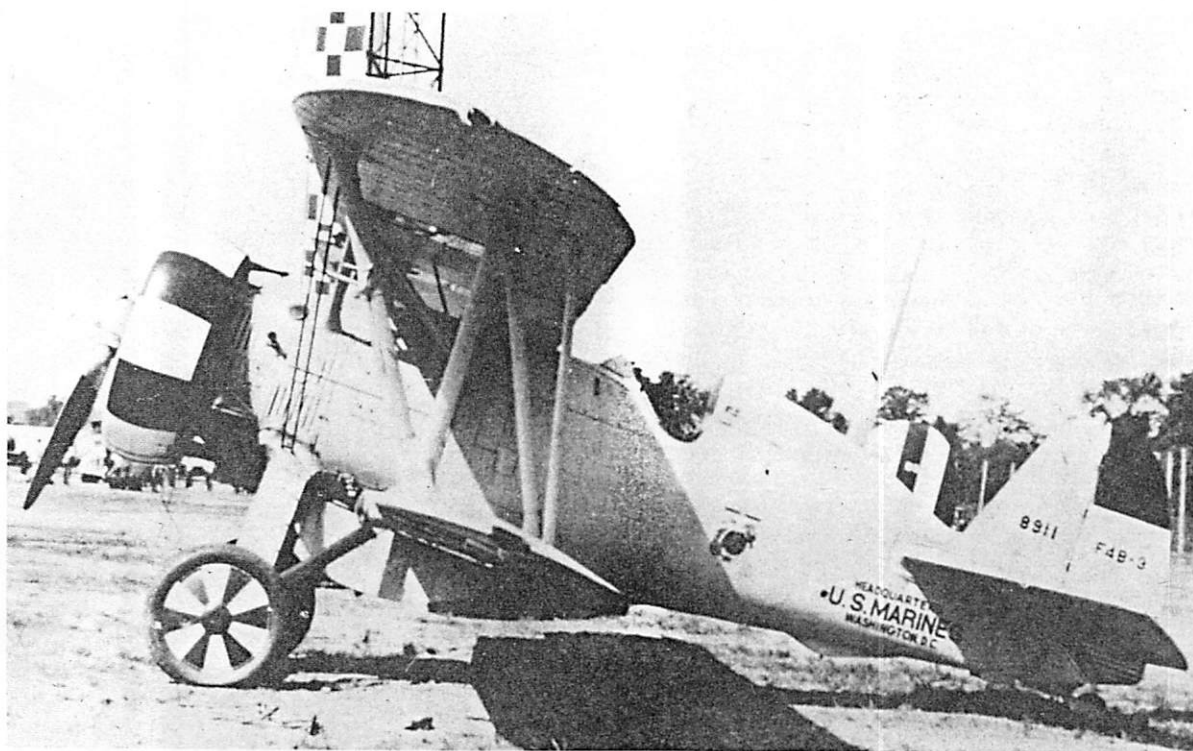
*A Curtiss HS-2L of Marine Scouting Squadron 1 (VS-1M) on Guam in May 1926. (Marine Corps Photo 530811).*



*Three of the giant Martin bombers lined up on the field at Quantico in 1925. (Nat Archives RG 127-G Photo 514939).*



*A Boeing FB-1 of Marine Fighting Squadron 6 (VF-6M) at San Diego. This was an early model of the new generation of aircraft the Marines began receiving in the late Twenties. (Nat Archives RG 127-G Photo 530238).*



*Advent of the Boeing F4Bs. A F4B-3 used as the Headquarters Marine Corps command plane in 1933. (Marine Corps Photo 529745).*

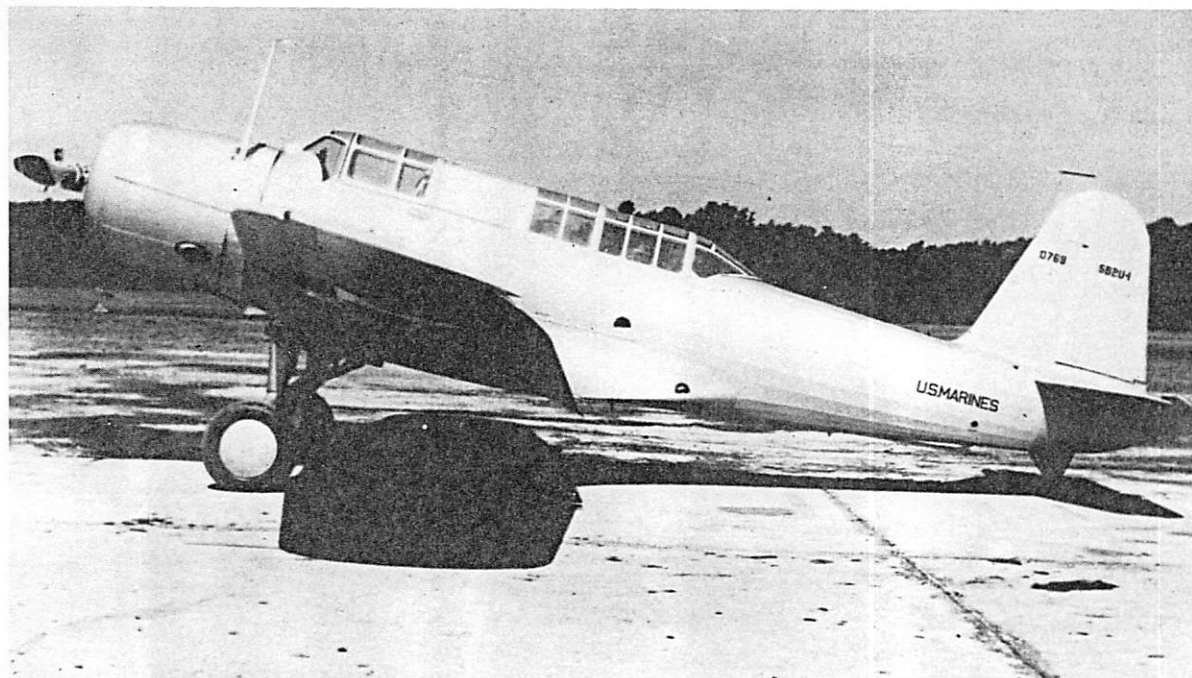


*Last and best of the Boeing biplanes, an F4B-4 of VF-9M in 1935. (Marine Corps Photo 515228).*





*Curtiss SOC-3s of Observation Squadron Two (VMS-2), part of Aircraft Two, Fleet Marine Force in 1933. (Marine Corps Photo 517613).*



*In 1938, Vought SB2U-1 "Vindicators," all-metal monoplane scout bombers, brought the observation elements of Marine aviation into the same performance range that the F2A did the fighter elements. (Marine Corps Photo 529317).*

**MARINE CORPS AVIATION:  
THE EARLY YEARS  
1912-1940**

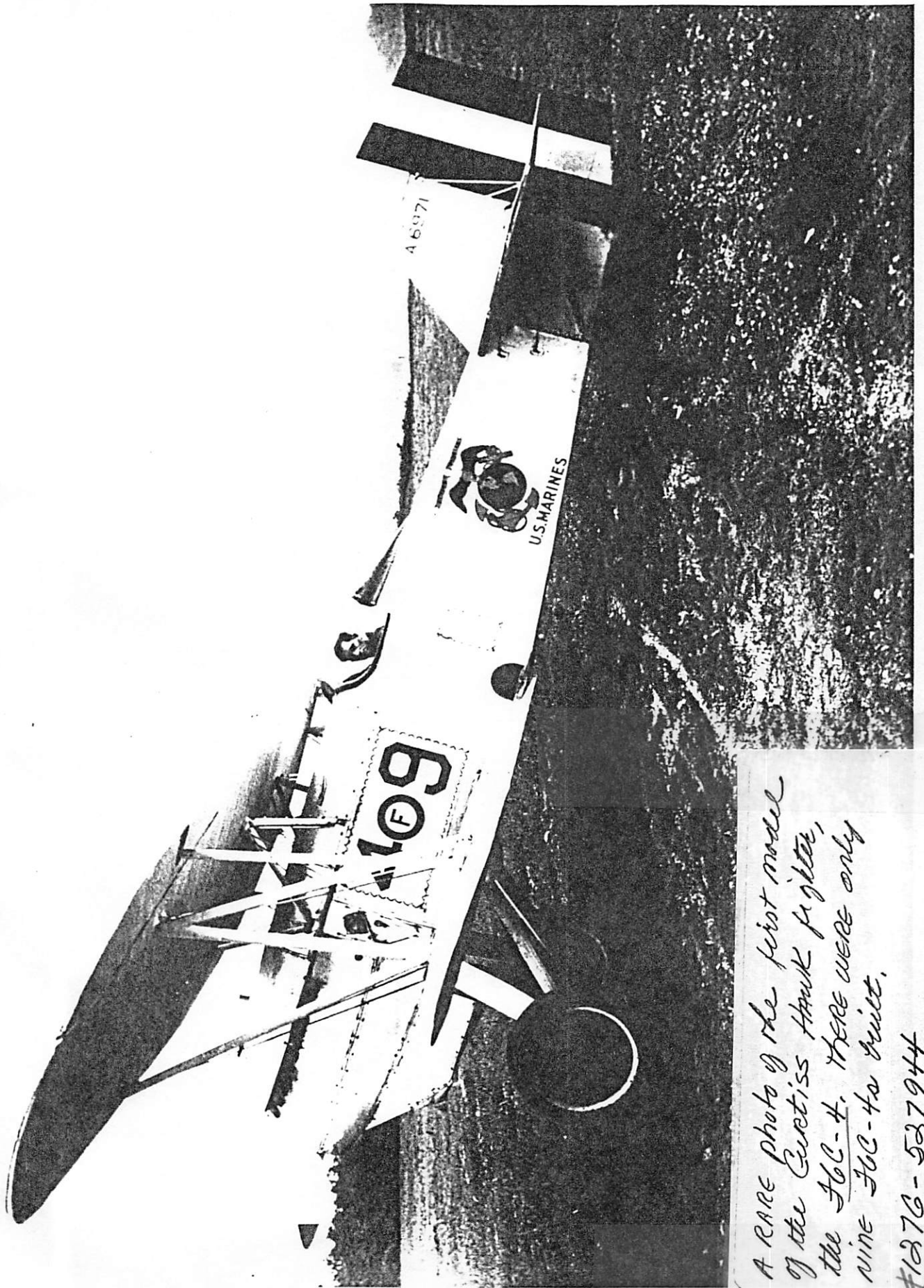
by  
Lieutenant Colonel Edward C. Johnson, USMC

Edited by  
Graham A. Cosmas



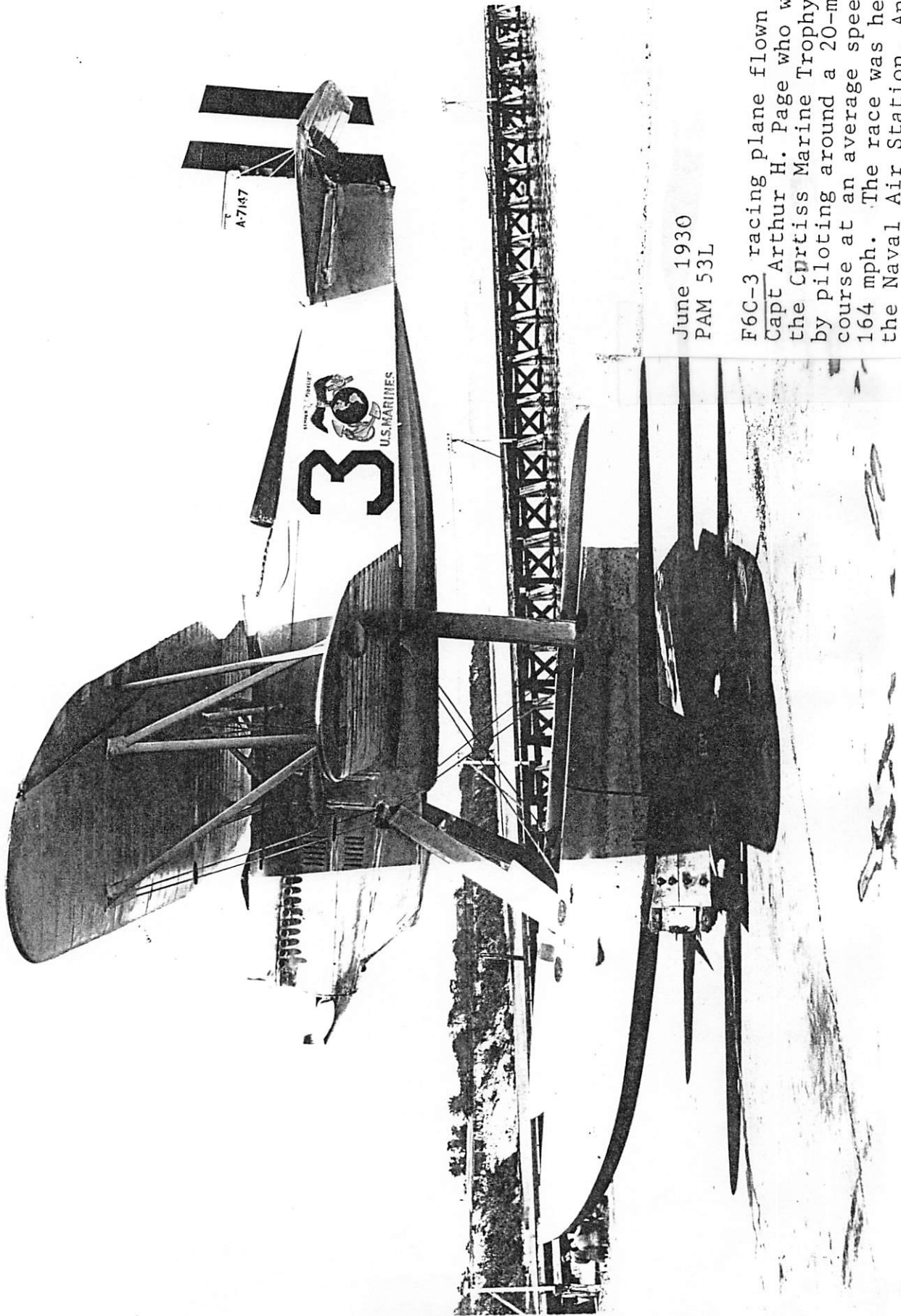
HISTORY AND MUSEUMS DIVISION  
HEADQUARTERS, U. S. MARINE CORPS  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

1977



A RARE photo of the first model  
of the Curtiss Hawk fighter,  
the J6C-4. There were only  
NINE J6C-4s built.

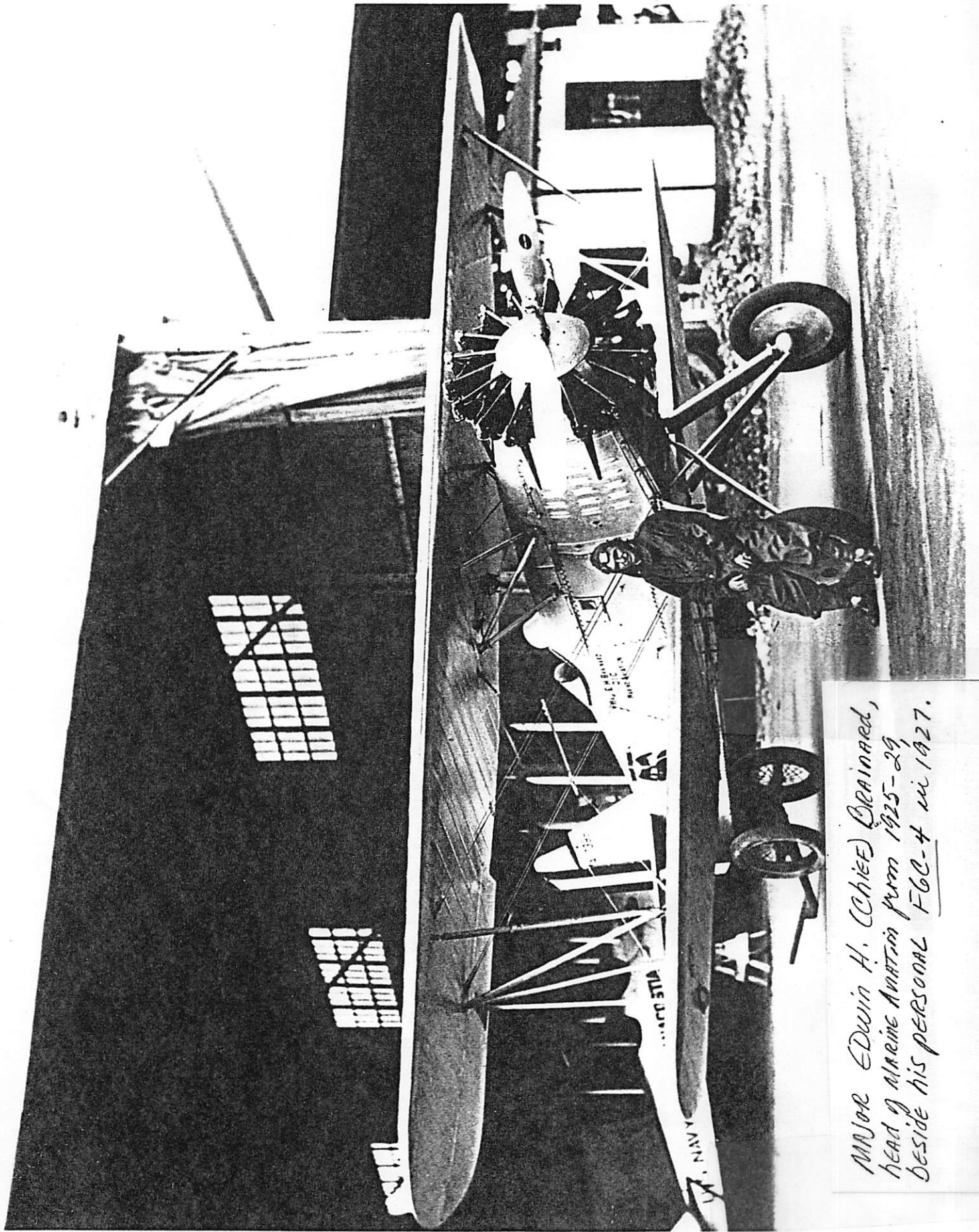
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June 1930  
PAM 53L

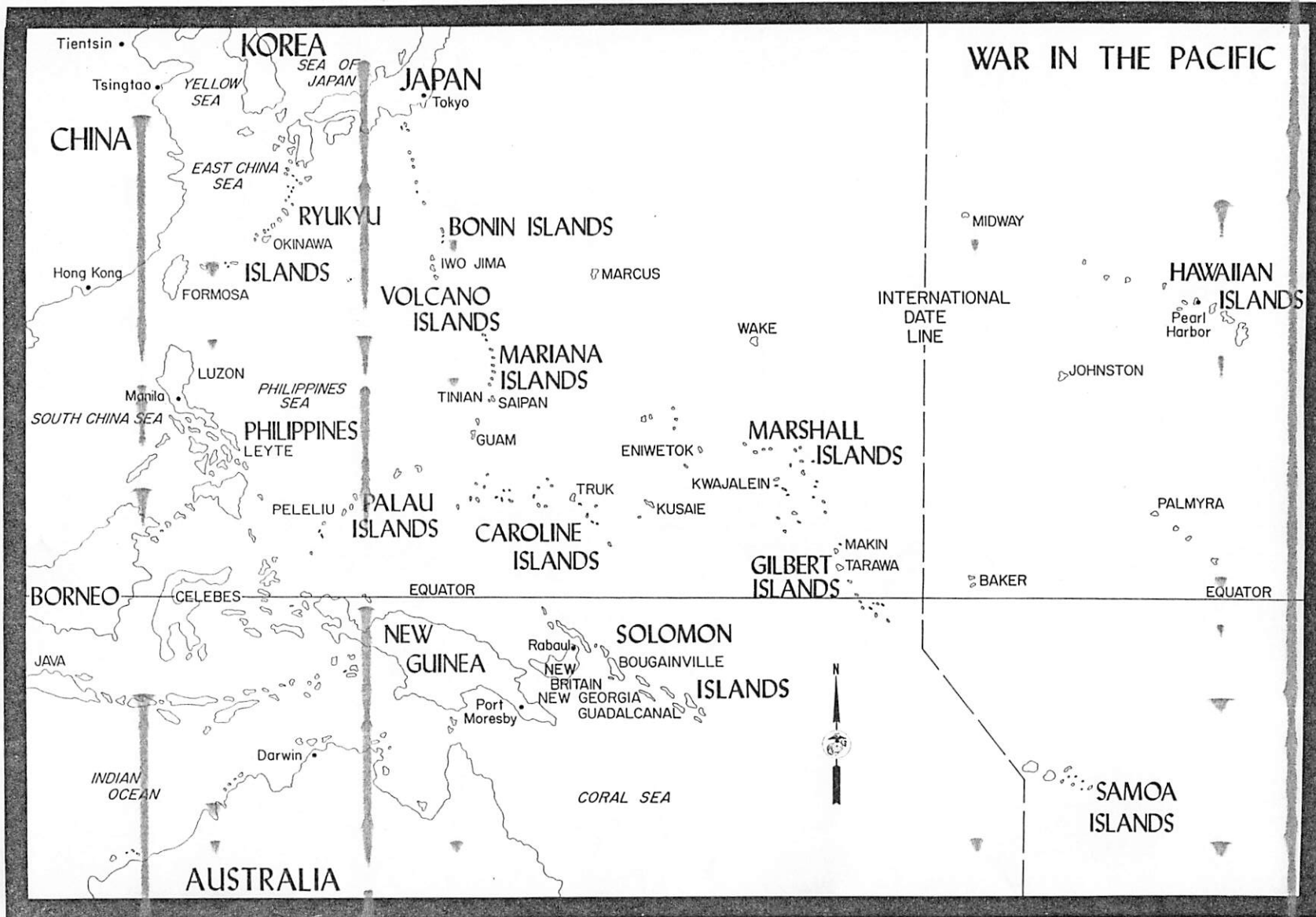
F6C-3 racing plane flown by  
Capt Arthur H. Page who won  
the Curtiss Marine Trophy race  
by piloting around a 20-mile  
course at an average speed of  
164 mph. The race was held at  
the Naval Air Station, Anacostia.

USMC #528155



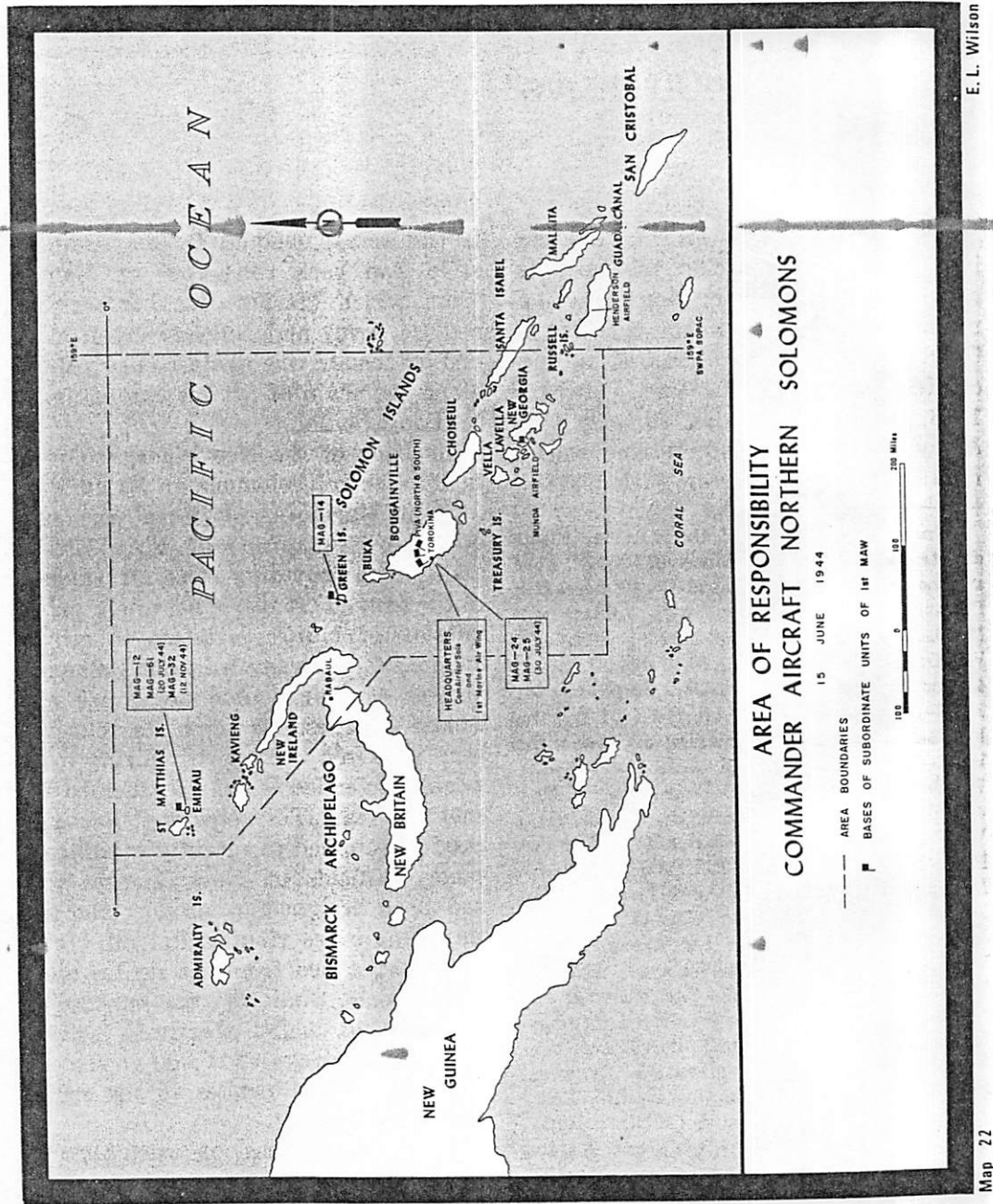
MAJOR EDWIN H. (CHIEF) BRAINARD,  
HEAD OF MARINE AVIATION FROM 1925-29,  
BESIDE HIS PERSONAL F6C-4 in 1927.

1276-574 772



# WAR IN THE PACIFIC

WORLD WAR II TO KOREA: 1941-1950



## MARINE CORPS AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS

Audio-Visual materials relating to the United States Marine Corps are held at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and the Department of Defense Still Media Records Center and Motion Media Depository. To obtain photographs and motion pictures, researchers should contact the proper activity.

For still photographs taken prior to 1941 and motion pictures taken prior to 1960:

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)  
Still Pictures Branch  
Washington, D.C. 20408  
Telephone: (202) 523-3236

The Marine Corps still and motion picture depositories were moved to Anacostia Naval Station in Washington, D.C. and Norton Air Force Base, near Riverside, California in September 1981. The Department of Defense provides centralized management and control of all the armed forces' still and motion media depositories.

For Marine Corps photographs dating from 1941:

DOD Still Media Records Center  
Building 168, NDW  
Anacostia Naval Station  
Washington, D.C. 20374  
Telephone: (202) 433-2166/2168

For motion pictures dating from 1960:

DOD Central Motion Media Depository  
Norton Air Force Base, California 92409  
Telephone: (714) 382-2513

Reference Section  
History and Museums Division, HQMC  
4 Sep 1986





# U. S. MARINE CORPS

Recruiting Bureau, 1100 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

*This article may be used for immediate publication.*

## SOUTH CAROLINA AVIATOR FLIES HIGH WITH MARINES



Lieut. William O. Brice (center), from Columbia, S. C., is winning fame as an aviator in the Marine Corps. He recently took part in the National Aviation Meet at Cleveland, O., where he led a formation of three planes which thrilled the spectators by its expert flying. Other members of the Marine flying trio are: Lieut. Peter P. Schrider (left), and Lieut. P. K. Smith (right), who were with the airplane squadron at Cleveland.

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**BY THE SAME AUTHOR**

*Tarawa: The Story of the Battle*

*On to Westward: War in the Central Pacific*

**By Robert Sherrod**



# **HISTORY OF MARINE CORPS AVIATION IN WORLD WAR II**

*Combat Forces Press · Washington*

