



By William Carlin White, Edited by Lillian M. White

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Early Aviation in Jupiter

To assist a group of visiting aviators, the hotel (The Carlin House) even hoisted an aviation windsock to the top of the flag pole as requested by the U.S.

Government. The best available information from the family, as told to me over the years, indicates that this was done in the fall and winter of the year 1916-17. During that period, a group of British aviators used the Jupiter River and the Loxahatchee basin as an advanced training area for small sea planes. The



group consisted of nine people and three planes with a pilot, copilot, and a mechanic assigned to each machine. Because there was no extra room at the local U.S. Government Reservation or the Carlin House, the group was quartered in a private home belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Walter Savage. I understand that the Savages had a contract to provide the necessary food and lodgings to the group, a job which they enjoyed very much. The Savage home was built by Mr. Armour who was the second keeper of the Jupiter Lighthouse. Ironically, when the Savages moved in to this new home, for some unknown reason, they nicknamed it "Fort Dixie" which was quite appropriate when the aviators arrived.

These planes were small by today's standards and were single-engine powered, high-winged biplane sea planes. They had only two seats in the boat-shaped main hull which was below the two wings and the motor. At the tip of each wing there was a small pontoon. The markings were those of the Allied Planes of WWI; two circular targets on the wings and wide vertical red, white and blue stripes on the rudder.

The daily practicing program for this partial air squadron was to make many landings and take-offs from two places. The wide area operation was done from the region of the river west of the F.E.C. Bridge. The tight area take-offs plus landings were east of this bridge and this is where the wind sock on the dock of the Carlin House came into play. When they took off and landed in the tight, area they were guided by the wind direction as indicated by the hotel dock wind-sock.



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The area west of the bridge was so much larger that a wind direction gauge was not needed.

During the time that these aviators were using the Jupiter area, the inlet was closed and it remained closed for the duration of their stay. With the inlet closed, the planes were parked, most of the time, on the sand on the river side of the beach, where water would have been if the inlet were open. Also, to protect themselves from the intense tropical sun which they were not used to, the group erected a number of tents in the same location.

Whenever Grandmother baked pies or other goodies for the hotel, she would make a few extra for them. One of the Carlin girls would deliver the aromatic basket by rowboat.

The distance from the hotel to the beach where the planes were kept was not far. The British group enjoyed these favors very much. In an effort to show their gratitude they offered, many times and unsuccessfully to give the girls a ride. The ladies were more than a little apprehensive. Even knowing that during the entire period that the group was here they had only one crash, without injury; for them even once was too much.

I don't believe that the make of these planes was ever mentioned. All that I remember being said about them was that they were of British manufacture. My guess is that they were a Navy version of the popular WWI British Jenny. (See picture text for more information.) Although it was a lot quieter around the river, the family and the people at the Carlin House missed the flying group when they left. It would not surprise me if the men of that squadron missed the people and the weather they were leaving, too.