

## THE ROHRBACH ARCHIVE - additions I

A valuable contribution was received from Mr. Didier Campion, Belgium, who recently acquired an album with genuine black and white photographs of Rohrbach aircraft. He was so generous to let me share in his find.

Among the pictures, the regular old fashioned snapshot reproduced on the next page, that shows Adolf Rohrbach's first and most famous airplane, the "Staaken 4/20". The following description is in Rohrbach's own words, translated by NACA from the "Zeitschrift des Vereines Deutscher Ingenieure", June 4, 1921:

"In the period from May, 1919 to September, 1920, the Zeppelin Works at Staaken [Berlin] built a swift traffic airplane, designed by myself, equipped with four 260 hp Maybach engines. Its empty weight is 6072 kg, which could be considerably reduced in building another on the basis of present experience. With a total weight of 8500 kg, the airplane has the exceptionally high wing loading of 80 kg/m<sup>2</sup>, while the load per hp is 8.5 kg. The speed of the airplane is 211 km/h at 100 rpm below the full rpm of the engine.

The four identical engine units are entirely independent of each other and completely separated from the central fuselage occupied by the passengers and crew, The engines rest on strong duraluminum brackets at the front edge of the wings, each engine driving a propeller directly, whereby the high speed insures satisfactory efficiency. On the carburetor side of each engine there is a space in the engine nacelle from which a mechanic, fully protected from the slip stream, can watch the engine and remedy slight troubles...

The engines can be reached during flight through a passageway inside the wing. Inside this passageway are the aileron- and carburetor controls, as are also the gasoline pipes. It is amply ventilated and warmed by the heat from the engines and facilitates communication between the members of the crew, since the noise of the engines is greatly deadened."

The photograph in the album is one that has been reproduced many times since it was taken and that may be found in many publications about Rohrbach. Maybe Mr. Campion now really owns the original! The famous picture depicts a proud group of people who, no doubt, all felt a special connection with this fascinating airplane. [I did try and enlarge some of the faces in the group hoping to discover the great airplane designer himself. So far I have failed.]

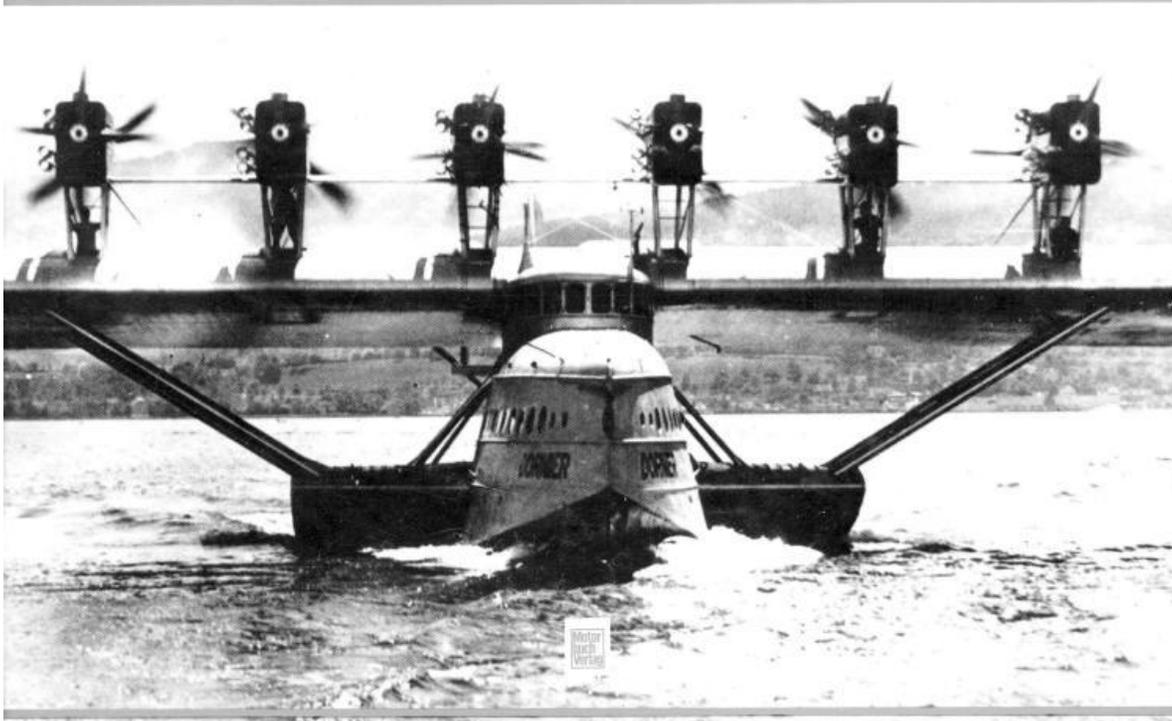
Noteworthy is also Rohrbach's comment about the accessibility of the engines during flight. In the Twenties this was a point of great concern during long distance flights. For this stationary posing there are four people stationed next to the (running) engines on top of the wing; did they have a bucket of sand ready? The man on top in central position is sitting in the open cockpit.

[As a point of interest I include on the page following a photograph of the Dornier Do-X (nearly ten years later) with maintenance men hidden among supports of the eight outer engines!]

ritstaalman



Dies ist die erste authentische Dokumentation über das zwölfmotorige Flugschiff Dornier Do X, das 1929 auf dem Bodensee zu seinem Erstflug startete. Mit 48 m Spannweite, 40 m Länge und 10 m Höhe war es damals das größte Flugzeug der Welt – ein Vorläufer der heutigen Großraumflugzeuge. Mit aufsehenerregenden Demonstrationenflügen durch Europa, über Afrika nach Südamerika, von Rio de Janeiro nach New York und zurück über den Nordatlantik bewies die Do X ihre erstaunliche Leistungsfähigkeit und Zuverlässigkeit. Auf einer Deutschlandtournee wurde das gigantische Flugschiff in vielen Städten begeistert umjubelt. Mit vielen, zum Teil erstmals veröffentlichten Dokumenten und Fotos aus dem Dornier-Archiv werden in diesem ungewöhnlichen Buch die Entwicklungsgeschichte, der Bau und die Flüge der Dornier Do X dargestellt. Ein einzigartiges Buch über ein technisches Meisterwerk der Luftfahrtgeschichte.



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