

Hanriot H.D.1. Originally owned by Capt. Charles Nungessor, French World War 1 Ace, credited with 43 victories.

Captain Nungessor, after displaying tremendous courage and skill in world war 1, came to Santa Monica about 1928 to participate in the production of some motion picture films at nearby studios. He brought the Hanriot along as part of his equipment, there were other airplanes involved but their identity cannot be determined at this late date. He hangered his equipment in Jim Grangers Pacific School of Aviation Hanger at Clover Field, Santa Monica, and the two men became good friends and worked closely in picture work until Capt. Nungessor launched his plan to fly the Atlantic with another World War 1 ace lieutenant Coli in a twin engined bomber. His fate on that flight is known to all.

Capt. Nungessors Hanriot sat in in Jims hanger until about 1929 whereupon Mrs. Nungessor wrote and forfeited the aircraft for the hanger rent due.

The time had come for Jim who's total flying experience had been acquired in O.X.5 Jennys and a hisso standard, to solo the Hanriot! And that he did! It might be worth mentioning here, hanriots have no brakes, a very small rudder, a knife like tailskid, no throttle, Clerget rotary engines had cut out switches instead, cut out all power or fly full bore and depend on the momentum of the engine to keep turning until you desired more power, These switches were located on the top end of the control stick and were called "blimp" switches. Switch up-power off, switch down-full power.

Jim learned how to taxi such an airplane between the hanger and the head of the runway, but he must have traveled a mile and a half doing it, but he was a game fellow, and get there he did, but with a blimp switch you can't sit there and think it over, you either go or stop the whole procedure then and there, so when he got to the head of the field and finally turned into the wind he blimped the switch and to his surprise the little Hanriot became airborne in about fifty feet. It must be remembered Santa Monica is on the coast, the air is heavy and the breeze brisk. Jim was so surprised he cut the switch and dropped back onto earth, immediately hit the switch again and this time was not quite so surprised and left the power on, and climb out he did! In a left climbing turn. No one had advised him that rotaries have a tremendous quantity of torque. But the flight went pretty well, the landing was something of an experience, but as they say, if you can walk away.

Jim flew the Hanriot in many movies and often at air shows in the ensuing years. One thing noteworthy was the attention the Hanriot got for its sheer noise making capability. Rotaries have no exhaust system, no collector rings, the exhaust port is the end of the cylinder and is housed in what was called a casserole which had big open

ports at the bottom of the circumference for cooling and exhaust purposes. The noise level on the ground was nearly as awesome as it was in the cockpit. Jim wore cotton in his ears, powder puffs in his helmet and still was nearly deaf for thirty minutes after flying the little scout. Another problem was the lubricating system which was a matter of mixing castor oil with the gasoline thru the fixed crankshaft to saturate the crankcase and everything else with some sort of lubrication. The vapors from the castor oil was very effective and a quick trip to the rest room was eminent after each flight. Fire was a constant threat. Any prime that was effected by turning the engine over to start collected in the casserole, then upon starting the exhaust would ignite the surplus prime and a fire was under way within the casserole. This was also true when approaching the field for a landing, the wind on the prop and the momentum of the engine would continue to turn the engine and feed fuel into the casserole even though the ignition or blimp switch was off then before the engine quite turning altogether the ignition not only started the engine but started the fire. Jim often remarked, it was a flying fire hazard. He always wore a chute when flying the Hanriot. I have no idea how much time my Father accumulated in the Hanriot but it had to be considerable even though he never took it very far. Most studio scenes were shot along the beaches south of Los Angeles or in the Newhall Saugus area a little north of Los Angeles. On at least one occasion I remember Dad racing the Hanriot in a match race against a few thomas morse scouts and some other "rotaries". The Hanriot easily out paced the field.

I regret that I never got to see Capt. Nungessor fly the Hanriot. I remember my father saying his flights were positively spectacular. Among other things he did what he called a stalling loop, a loop with an inverted stall at the top. He told my father this was a way to reverse a chase advantage in combat. Those who did see him fly had no doubt that the little Hanriot was fully capable of spectacular aerobatics, but also gave great credit to Capt. Nungessor for his smooth and delicate execution of some very inovative maneuvering both inverted and upright. After all, it is doubtful that the Hanriot or any other world war 1 planes could bear a load of more than two or three g,s except in the hands of very skilled pilots. Jim Granger was not a demonstrative man, to my knowledge he never attempted anything but mild dives, wingovers and loops in the Hanriot.

When the ends of the cylinders on the Clerget engine began turning blue Jim was advised by some old timers to quite flying the engine, it could completely dissintegrate in the air and tear the whole front end out of the plane. He took their advice. An attempt was made to replace the engine with a 130 h.p. Monosapap rotary purchased from Crawfords Airplane Supply at Venice Calif. and that engine is still in the plane as far as I know. The original Clerget, is on a

stand nearby last I knew. The plane is in existence, it has been modified in a few ways. First, Jim soon learned the wooden rudder bar originally installed was unsatisfactory and changed that to pedals, also he reinforced the engine mount up front when the Monosapap was installed. Some wooden members in the front fuselage was replaced with chrome moly tube to beef up the frame. Other than that the plane was original before it left the Granger family.

Upon Jims death in 1934 while testing the famed Rider R3 (Marcoux Bromberg Special) Clema Granger used the Hanriot for an attraction for war movies, fairs, air shows etc. It would be completely disassembled and re assembled for each occasion, quick disconnections were never used, it remained original, but due to the fire hazard of having such a display in a theatre or other confined quarters, also the problem of collectors attempting to steal parts off the plane it was finally put in storage in Ontario, Calif. About 1944 or 45 Clema Granger donated the plane to a museum.

At last report the Hanriot is hanging from the ceiling in the Planes of Fame Museum at Chino Airport in California. I can assure you the plane is original. If you will look at the left side of the fuselage the skull and cross bones within a black heart, Nungessors trade mark painted on all his planes, was at one time cut out by a vandal. The one there now was hand sewn in place and painted by Jim Granger. Unless the plane has been recovered evidence of the sewing can still be seen.

There are bullet holes in the casserole, but it is doubtful that they were put there in combat. The Hanriot was not a fighter, but a scout, althow scouts often found themselves in fights. Mr. Bill Beard, of the Bill and Melba Beard family at Phoenix, Arizona once researched the Hanriot pretty thouroughly, from its original manufacture. His conclusion was that at some point in the history of the plane the casserole had been changed from another plane. Bill felt confident that this particular airplane did not actually see combat service. In my own experience in and around the plane there was never any evidence of guns or any type of combat equipment on board. If you get in the area, drop in see the very rare airplane, and breif yourself on this fellow Charles Nungessor, his record in world war one is one you will never forget. Shot down some ninteen times, taken prisoner, escaped, etc etc. He was more remarkable than his airplane.

A STATIC display