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UNA Historia Con Alas, by Herbert Boy

Arnold W. Knauth

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BOOK REVIEW

UNA HISTORIA CON ALAS, by Herbert Boy. Ediciones Guadarrama, Santa Catalina 3, Madrid, 1955. pp. 277, with index. Illustrated.

This interesting account of aviation enterprise in South America, written with the collaboration of Caballero Calderon, is an excellent counterfoil to Burden's "Struggle for Airways in Latin America."

We hear, in the English language, much about American air enterprises in South America. We know that, in the years of World War II, the European airlines yielded to American and local airlines. The story of those European early birds has not heretofore been available. In this book it is well recounted. Beginning with the days of training of young men from South America in the Rhineland before 1914, and their adventures in World War I, the Second Part recounts how these youths, with German fliers whose wings in Europe were clipped in 1918, betook themselves to Colombia and began the first romantic service between Barranquilla and Bogota, along the tortuous course of the Magdalena River, using Junkers F-13 flying boats, praised by General Mitchell for their "practicality." The Compania Colombo-Alemana de Transportes Aereos soon became familiarized as Scadta, and this is largely the story of that enterprise, which eventually, in World War II, was reorganized as Avianca—Aerovias Nacionales de Colombia. First the valleys and then the mountains, and then the great Amazon jungles had to be explored and conquered, with many adventures. Colonel Boy tells with special relish how the airport on the Rio Caqueta was established and finally named Puerto Boy. Part Three describes the peaceable expansion of the services; Part Four deals with the struggle with Peru concerning the jungle boundaries, and the conflict concerning Leticia, the port on the Amazon below Iquitos, and Tarapaca, to the north on the Putomayo. Then came World War II, and the lively cloak-and-dagger between Germans and Americans which finally resulted in the chapter "La Scadta se transforma en Avianca."

No air-minded person interested in the story of flying in the northern regions of South America will wish to miss perusing this lively and factual book. The Spanish is easy and fluent. The photographs are well-chosen; and the page depicting tres hydraviones and tres mulles pulling a street-car is amusing.

ARNOLD W. KNAUTH