

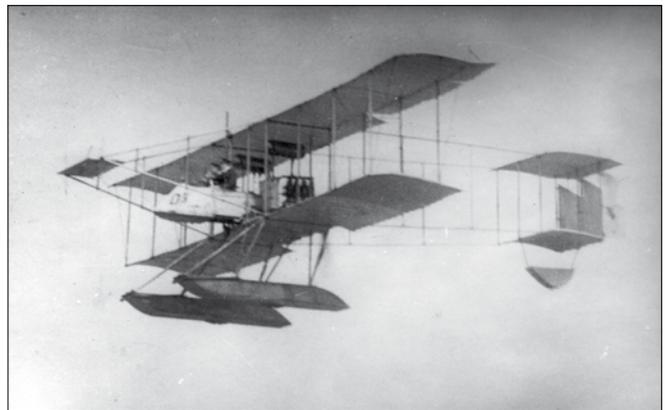
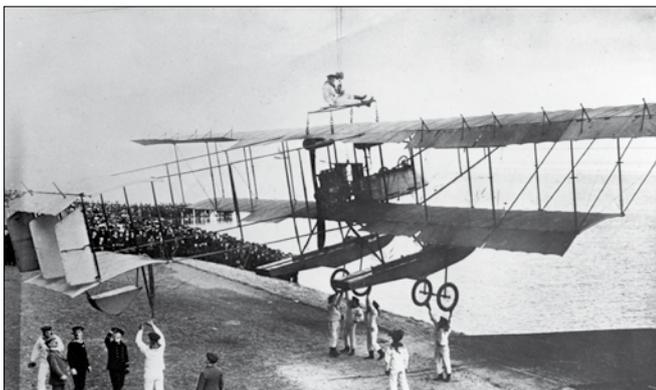


INITIALLY KNOWN AS THE PILOT-FLUGTECHNISCHE, the Albatros Werke AG was formed in Johannisthal, Berlin, on 20 December 1909 by Dr Walter Huth and Otto Wiener and was one of Germany's earliest builders of aeroplanes. A change in the company's organisation in 1910, putting it on a more businesslike footing, brought a final name change and it then became Flugzeugwerke Albatros GmbH. During the 1914-18 war the name Albatros became synonymous with a series of robust two seat reconnaissance aircraft and sleek looking scouts built for the German army's Fliegertruppe but, like other pioneer manufacturers, their original products were a lot different. Initially, these were either direct copies of other (mostly French) manufacturer's aircraft (Antoinette, Somer and Farman) or built under licence from them. As it gained in experience, Albatros began to build its own designs and also undertook to train pilots for the German army and naval air services. Although Flugzeugwerke Albatros GmbH concentrated its main efforts on building landplanes it did produce a small number of seaplanes, although, until the advent of the Albatros W.4 single seat seaplane fighter, none of these was very successful nor built in any quantity. To some extent this would have been because, in the early days, the German navy's actual requirement for aeroplanes was quite small.

The company's earliest products included the Type WMZ of 1912, a pusher biplane that was made either as a simple floatplane or as an amphibian with additional wheels attached to the floats. Another early product was the Type WDD of 1913, a tractor biplane mounted on floats. Both of these were intended for use on maritime reconnaissance or patrol. Curiously, neither is identified specifically within the Atlas chart.

Ernest Heinkel, who had been working for LVG (Luft Verkehrs GmbH) joined Albatros in 1913 and was responsible for the design of the Albatros B.I - a single engine, unarmed two-seat biplane intended for use as a reconnaissance aircraft for the German army's air service. A development of this, the Albatros B.II formed the basis for Heinkel's design of a floatplane for use in maritime reconnaissance for the navy. This was the Albatros W.I. The chart in the Atlas, showing details of the production of aircraft by Albatros, does little

*The Albatros WMZ pusher amphibian being hoisted in and attracting public attention. Probably the machine with the serial D2, accepted by the navy in December 1913. :CCI Archive*



*A hazy view of Albatros WMZ floatplane D3 in flight. This machine was written off in August 1913. :CCI Archive*

to explain details of the earlier machines but does show what seems to be a series of developments of (probably) this aircraft. Some of the earliest ones in the range appear to have army serial numbers and the (slightly) later ones numbers in the marine number sequence. Curiously, there is no mention at all in the Atlas of the designation W.1, though W.2 follows the aircraft in this unidentified sequence. It is probable that the type K.351 (of which ten were produced) was in fact a W.1.

That the W.1 machines existed is a fact and two were given maritime serials 552 and 553, although their actual serials in the sequence were 52 and 53 the prefix '5' being added for security reasons or, more accurately, to give the impression of a larger number of aircraft available than actually existed.

The W.1 was a simple single-engine unarmed two-seat floatplane with three bay biplane wings and was designed for use for coastal patrol work. Like the land based Albatros B.II, it had a rectangular slab-sided fuselage that tapered to a vertical knife-edge at the rear. It (the fuselage) was based on four longerons covered with plywood. Forward of the cockpit, these were of ash and behind the cockpit they were of spruce. In the convention of the time, the pilot sat in the rear cockpit and the observer in the front, between the wings and thus suffering from a severely restricted range of vision. The 150hp Benz Bz.III engine was mounted on ash bearers with most of its cylinder block exposed. Its radiators were mounted on

*In spite of the serial number 552 shown on its fuselage, this was, in fact, Albatros W.1 Marine Number 52, the prefix 5 being added for propaganda purposes. :CCI Archive*

