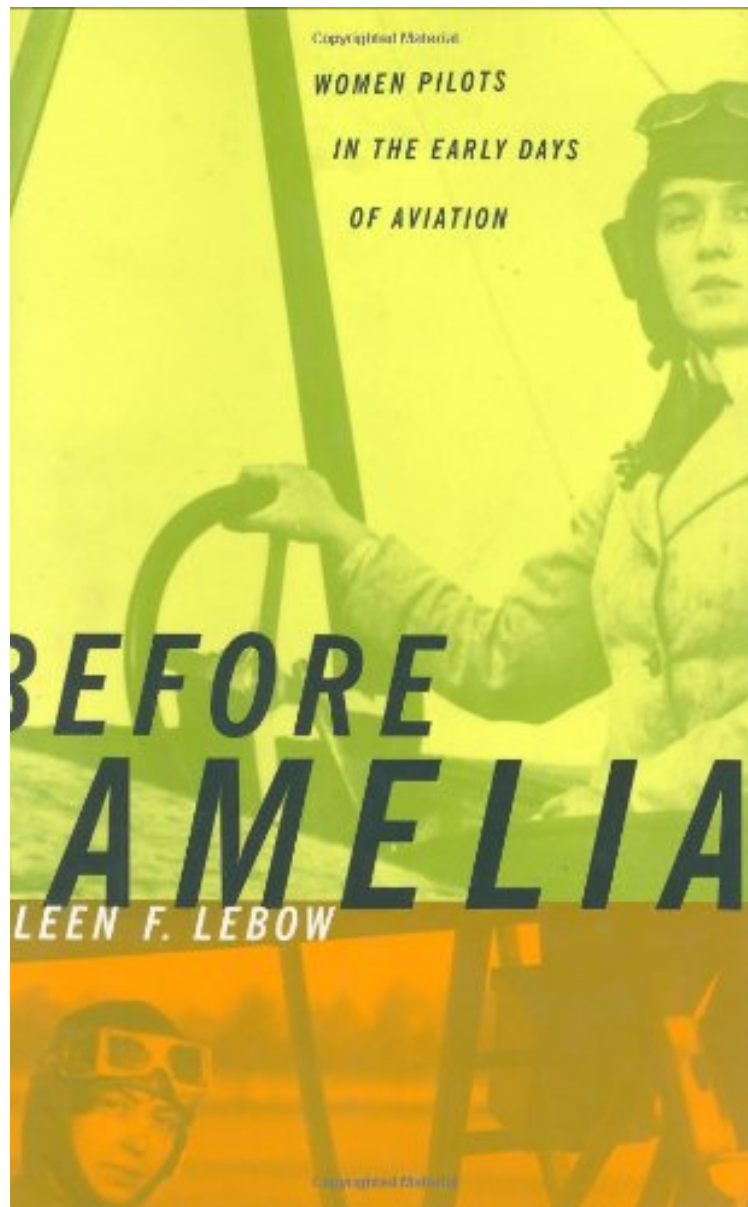


(Mobile book) Before Amelia: Women Pilots in the Early Days of Aviation

Before Amelia: Women Pilots in the Early Days of Aviation

Eileen F. Lebow

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Eileen F. Lebow : Before Amelia: Women Pilots in the Early Days of Aviation before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Before Amelia: Women Pilots in the Early Days of Aviation:

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. The earliest days of the very first flying machinesBy Midwest Book

Review *Before Amelia: Women Pilots In The Early Days Of Aviation* by Eileen F. Lebow offers the reader an engaging glimpse into the earliest days of the very first flying machines, and the dozens of female pilots who made aviation history before the famous Amelia Earhart. Starting with Raymonde de Laroche, a French woman who became the first licensed female pilot in 1910, and profiling numerous other international female pilots, *Before Amelia* is a welcome contribution to both Women Studies and Aviation History reference collections and supplemental reading lists.

Before Amelia is the remarkable story of the world's women pioneer aviators who braved the skies during the early days of flight. While most books have only examined the women aviators of a single country, Eileen Lebow looks at an international spectrum of pilots and their influence on each other. The story begins with Raymonde de Laroche, a French woman who became the first licensed female pilot in 1909. De Laroche, Lydia Zvereva, Melli Beese, Hilda Hewlitt, Harriet Quimby, and the other women pilots profiled here rose above contemporary gender stereotypes and proved their ability to fly the temperamental heavier-than-air contraptions of the day. Lebow provides excellent descriptions of the dangers and challenges of early flight. Crashes and broken bones were common, and many of the pioneers lost their lives. But these women were adventurers at heart. In an era when women's professional options were severely limited and the mere sight of ladies wearing pants caused a sensation, these women succeeded as pilots, flight instructors, airplane designers, stunt performers, and promoters. This book fills a large void in the history of the first two decades of flight.

From *Library Journal* In the early days of aviation, the Wright Brothers refused to sell their airplanes to women because, in their opinion, women lacked the requisite "coolness and judgment" to fly. Despite such obstacles, a number of women in the first decades of flying managed to become accomplished pilots and to play various other roles in aviation. Lebow's book surveys the careers of these remarkable women, both in the United States and internationally. She looks at women such as Hilda Hewlett of England, who was not only a pilot but cofounded England's first aviation school in 1910 and produced her own line of aircraft. Lebow (*A Grandstand Seat: The American Balloon Service in World War I*) is an accomplished writer particularly adept at doing archival and historical research and then bringing it to life. Much of the attention in the area of women in aviation has gone to later figures, like Amelia Earhart, while the earlier pioneers of the pre-World War I era have been largely overlooked. Lebow's well-researched book fills that gap. It is engaging to read, with useful chapter notes and ample illustrations. Highly recommended for women's studies and aviation history collections. Charles Cowling, SUNY at Brockport Lib. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Booklist* The "early days" of the subtitle are those before 1914, and the number of women who flew then, some without actual licenses, runs well into three figures. The first to fly and get a license was French: Raymonde de Laroche. She had numerous compatriots, though, not least the amazing, long-lived Marie Marvingt. Harriet Quimby was first-with-license in the U.S., but she was killed less than a year afterward; Ruth Law and the Stinson sisters lasted longer and flew farther in the U.S. Hilda Hewlett was not only the first Englishwoman to fly; she and the German Milli Beese were the first women to run aircraft factories, which Beese, however, managed with the handicap of marriage to a Frenchman. There were Russians, Italians, Scandinavians, Austrians, Hungarians, and many others who demolished taboos, records, airplanes, and occasionally themselves with pioneering aplomb. Alas, that World War I and its plethora of higher-tech planes and male pilots befell these unsung pioneers, whose story belongs in every adult aviation and women's studies collection. Roland Green Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Lebow has undertaken major international research to unearth the obscure and long-forgotten pilots who finally receive the recognition they deserve in this lively and well-written book. . . It is a pleasure to be introduced to these wonderful women by such a talented writer. This book will appeal to anyone with an interest in the earliest period of aviation or in women's history and to the general reader looking for a fast-paced, highly readable work on an unusual topic." GATEWAY HERITAGE