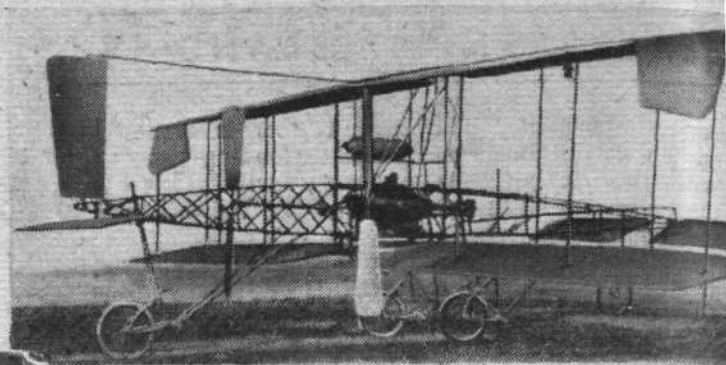
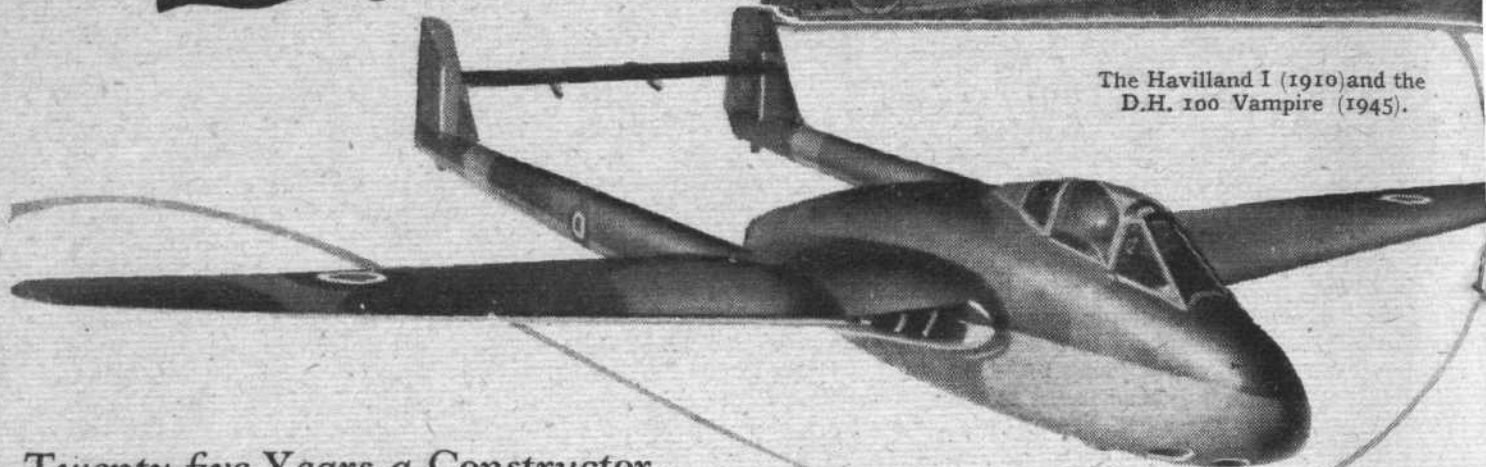


# “D.H.”



The Havilland I (1910) and the D.H. 100 Vampire (1945).



*Twenty-five Years a Constructor,  
Thirty-six Years a Designer: The*

## *Achievements of the de Havilland Aircraft Company, Limited*

By THE EDITOR

**B**UT for what can only be regarded as a miraculous escape, the company whose history is surveyed in the following pages would never have come into existence; there would have been no de Havilland aircraft, and the course, if not the result, of two world wars might have been different. That is rather a strong statement, but it is true. The part played in the two world wars by de Havilland aircraft has been extremely important. Not only so, but during the years between the wars de Havilland civil aircraft contributed much towards progress, largely because the firm specialised on commercial, club and private-owner types. That this did not prevent them, when the need arose, from producing one of the finest military aircraft in the world is proved by the Mosquito.

However, to revert to my opening sentence, the escape referred to occurred early in 1910. The machine was described in *Flight* of April 9th, 1910, as the "Havilland No. 1." Mr. Geoffrey de Havilland, as he then was, had designed it, and it had been built in a shed near Newbury with the help of Mr. F. I. Hearle, who is still on the de Havilland board of directors. After getting into the air a few feet the port wings collapsed and the

machine crashed. That it did so pretty thoroughly is shown by the picture of the wreck, taken from the April 16th, 1910, issue of *Flight*, but Mr. de Havilland escaped serious injury. Our comment at the time, written by Algernon Berriman who was then technical editor of the journal, was: "Fortunately for the British industry, Mr. G. de Havilland, its designer and builder, is a man of the type whose enthusiasm and determination is apt to increase rather than diminish after any preliminary setback; while equally fortunate is it for readers of *Flight* that he should be willing to place much of the experience that he has just gained at the disposal of fellow British workers in the interests of the aeronautic movement." We on *Flight* who have had the privilege of knowing and recording, from that time to the present, the work of Sir Geoffrey de Havilland (as he now is) and his team, can subscribe wholeheartedly to that early tribute. It was merited at the time; it is still merited to-day. What is even more remarkable is the fact that, in spite of all his great successes, Sir Geoffrey is as modest and unassuming in 1945 as Mr. de Havilland was in 1910. He is one of those rare individuals whose charm inspires friendship and a loyalty in all who work with and for him, which could not possibly be engendered in any other way.

Although "Havilland No. 1" was not in itself a success, it incorporated many features which are common practice to-day. It had ailerons and an adjustable tailplane. Most important of all, it had a 50 b.p.h. de Havilland "flat four" water-cooled engine which drove adjustable-pitch airscrews through shaft reduc-



The Havilland I crash in April, 1910, which was nearly a pre-natal disaster for the de Havilland Aircraft Co.