Those Magnificent Flying Machines

Do aeroplanes have a personality?

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As Ernest K. Gann wrote in 'Fate is the Hunter': "...the various types, regardless of their natural origin, are as individual as breeds of animals. The Stinson A is thought of as wanting a firm hand, else it can very quickly prove more treacherous than an unfanged cobra. In contrast, the DC-3 is an amiable cow... marvellously forgiving the most clumsy pilot."

Air-India had them both in its fleet, as so many others on this page — from the long-forgotten Puss Moth, a wood-and-fabric affair, which began it all back in 1932 to the modern day 'Palace in the Sky' Boeing 747. They provide a remarkable historical record not merely of Air-India, but of the growth and development of air transport in the 20th century.

And so here they are in a unique 'plane portrait' of Air-India, composed mainly of models, lovingly created by Mr. P.D. Baliwala, former Dy. Director, Engineering, back in 1970. He painstakingly collected technical specifications of each aircraft. One of his skilled draftsmen, Yeshwant Bapat, prepared detailed drawings and then his devoted band of carpenters carved out from carefully chosen blocks of wood, authentic replicas of Air-India planes, complete in every detail. The pride of place in this pantheon, of course, goes to the Puss Moth, which Mr. J.R.D. Tata flew from Karachi to Bombay on October 15, 1932, to start the first scheduled airmail service in India.

Each of these planes was once part of Air-India's proud fleet. Most of them have long since disappeared in the pages of history, but almost magically restored to life in the following pages flying over the length and breadth of India, and some even on their way to distant lands.

This is a tribute to hundreds of Air-Indians who have taken care of them, nursed them on the ground, flown them as pilots, and others who have contributed in a million different ways to build Air-India as it is today.

K.S. Mhatre

Why the 12?

The first 30 years of Air-India's history were undoubtedly the most momentous, dominated by a pioneering spirit. The 12 planes in the calendar represent that period. On the occasion of the 60th Anniversary, what is more appropriate than to give them a pride of place, to provide a glimpse into the past in order to derive inspiration for the future.

एअर-इंडिया
AIR-INDIA

Concept, Design & special effects by C.V. Kamkar AIR-INDIA Art Studio, Bombay.

Processing by Unique Photo Offset. Printed by Fortune.

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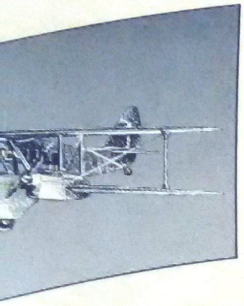

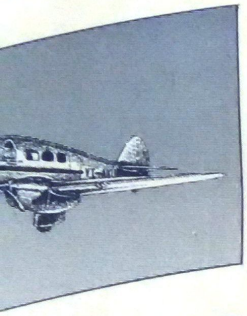

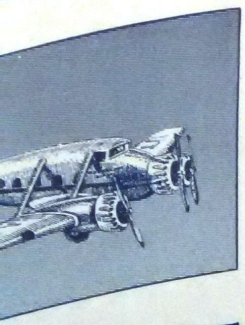

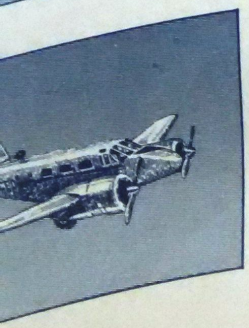

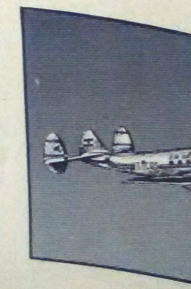

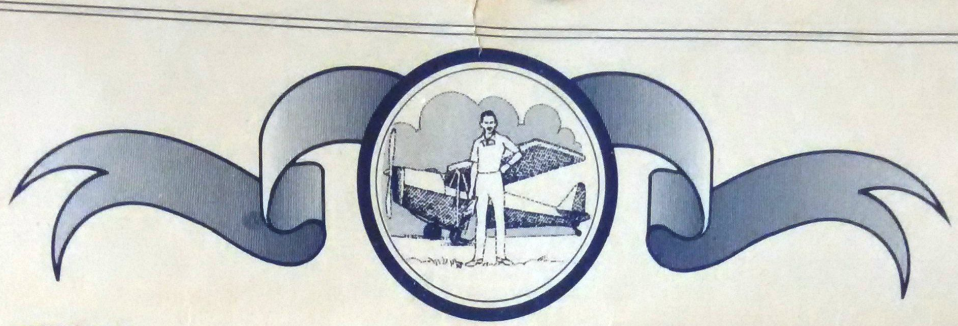

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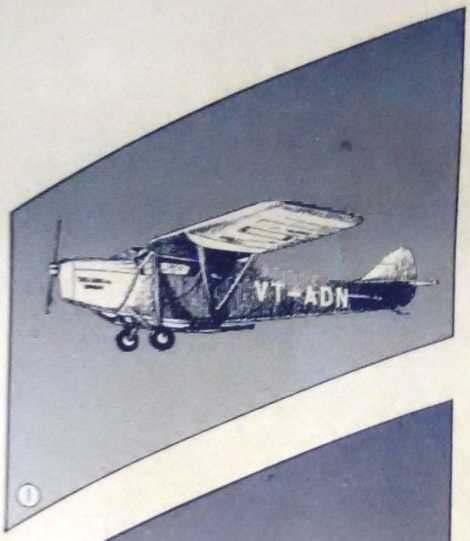

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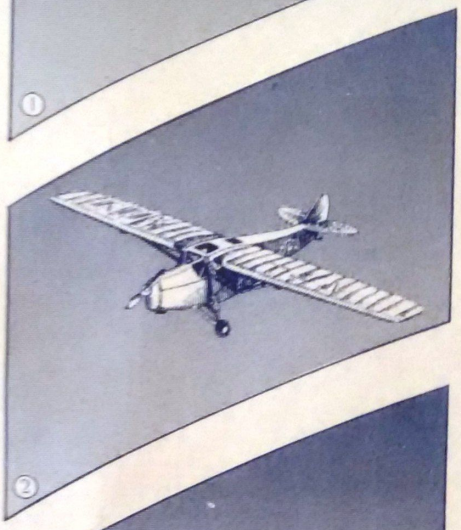

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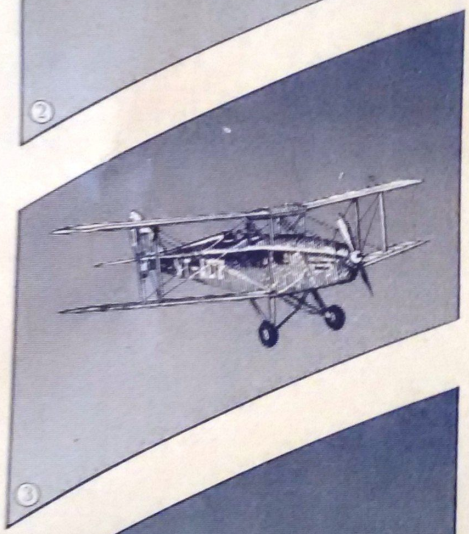

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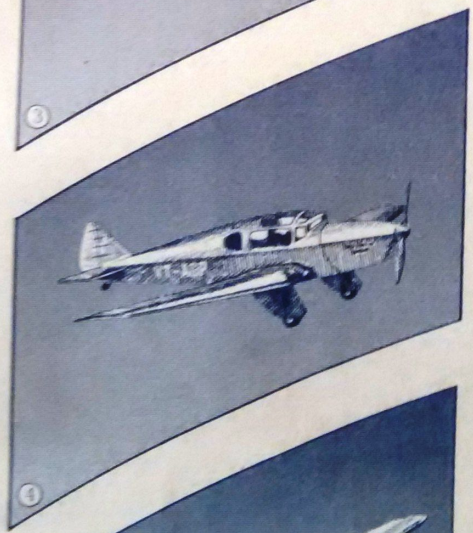

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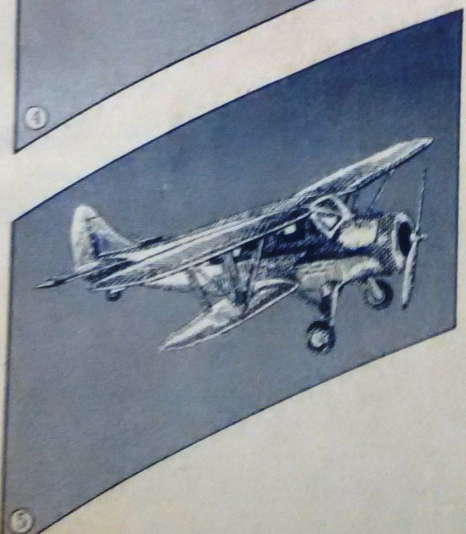

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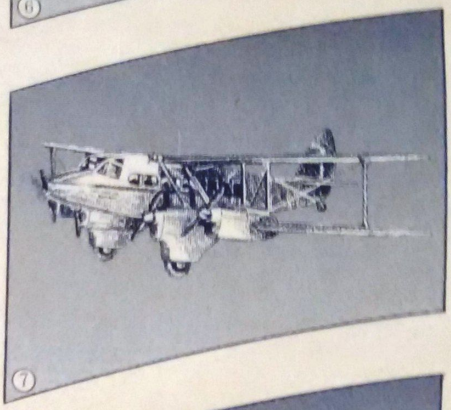

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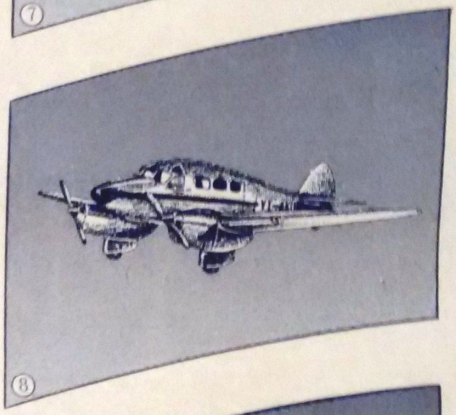

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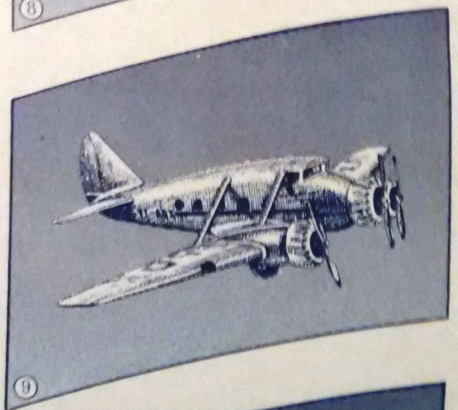

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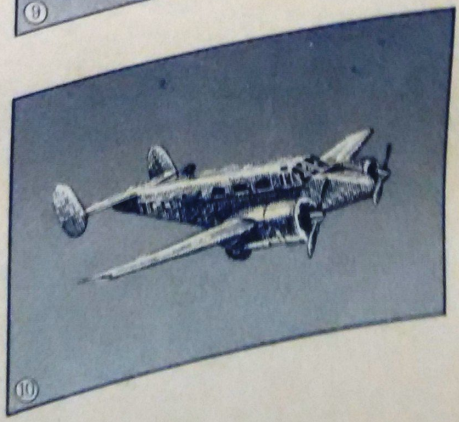

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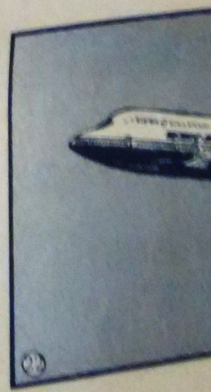

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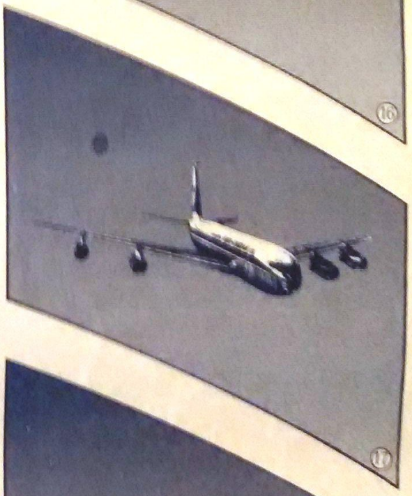
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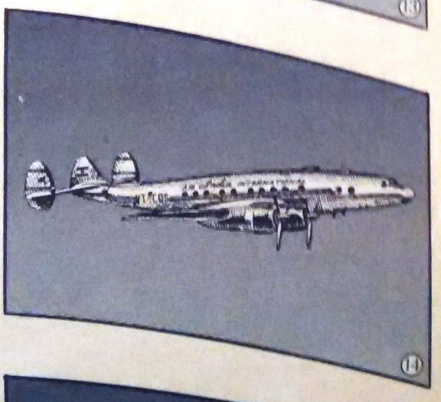
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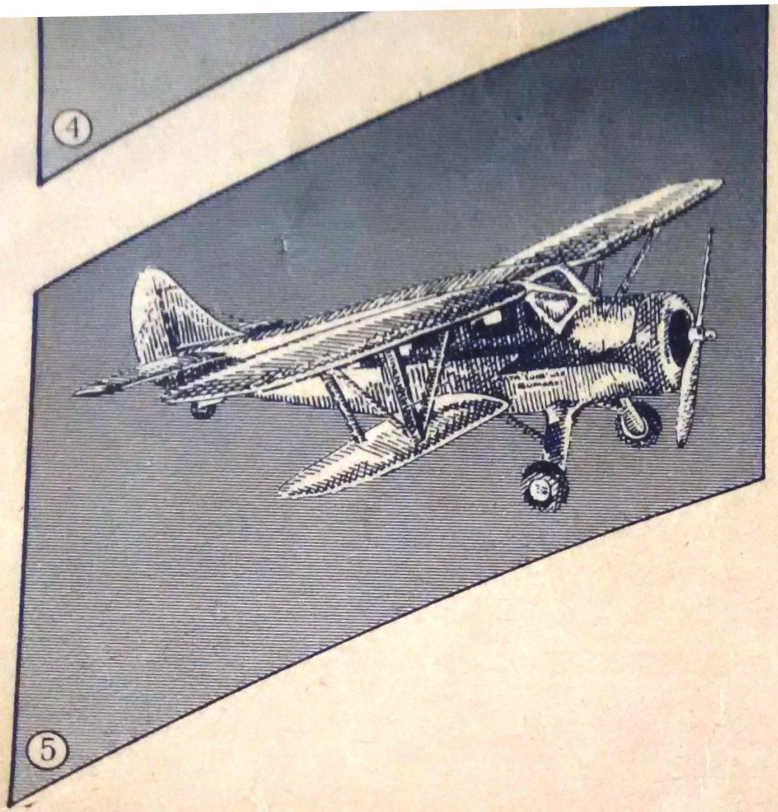

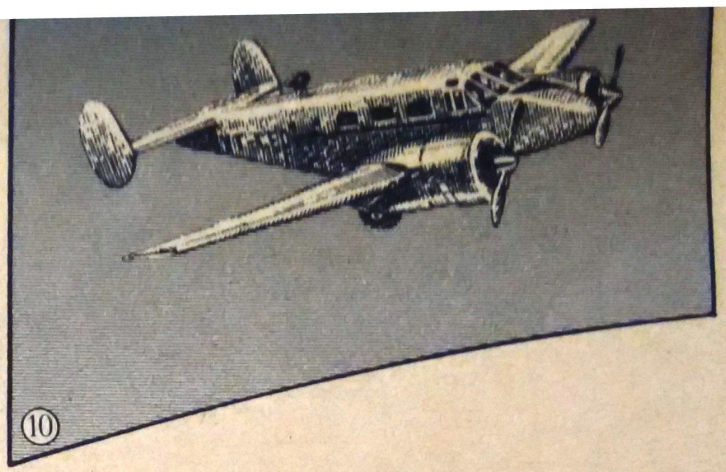

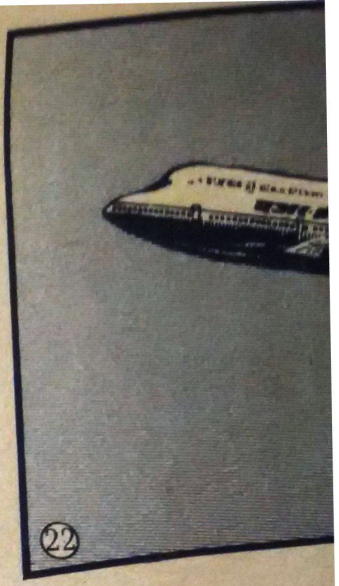

Concept, Design & special effects by C.V. Kamkar. AIR-INDIA Art Studio, Bombay.

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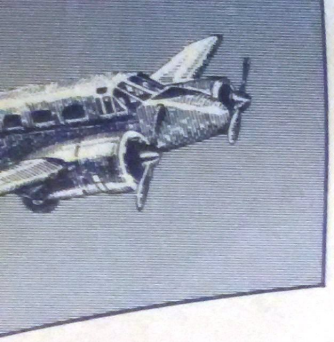

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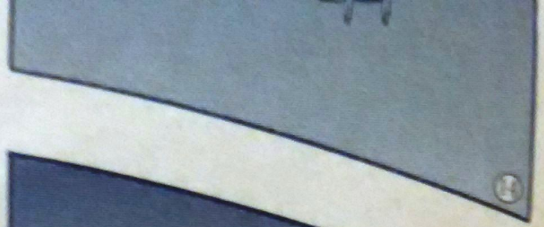

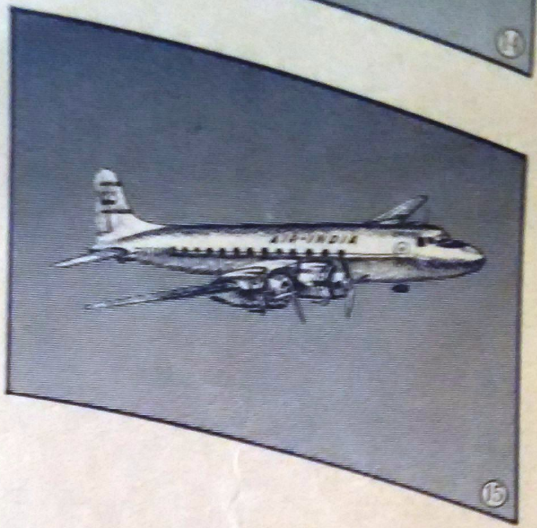

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