



Dan Calkin and his ELF's: (he never called them Elves)

John J Brown

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Dan Calkin

After five years of intensive research, the complete story of Dan Calkin's life and his ELF engines is finally being told. Dan's ELF's are among the most desirable to collectors of model airplane engines. Until now, very little was known about the engines or the man; now they will both be among the best know and understood.

With full cooperation and encouragement of the Calkin family - Dan's widow Josephine, and daughter Cecilia, the story of Dan from his school days to model airplane engine manufacture to rocket scientist is complete. Extensive interviews with former employees and associates, as well as company records, help to fill in any missing details.

Dan Calkin manufactured the first small production engines for model airplanes and made the world's first one-quarter in spark plugs for them. He specialized in multi-cylinder engines, including twins, fours, and even six cylinder engines.

The first five chapters detail Dan's life and his struggle to make a living during the Depression years and afterward. The succeeding chapters examine all the engine models including production changes, accessories and options.

The surviving prototype and experimental engines are shown, as well as all twenty-three models of the ELF production engines. Each engine model is fully described with text and photographs. Every part is shown with all its changes. Most of the tooling used to make the engines still exists and is documented through photographs.

If you have ever been interested in model airplanes, you will be captivated by this story of one man's two-decade efforts to manufacture quality model airplane engines.

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