

## **First Aircraft Carrier – 1922**

### **The USS *Langley***

The USS *Langley*, an 11,500-ton aircraft carrier, was converted from the collier USS *Jupiter* beginning in 1920. Commissioned in March 1922, *Langley* was the U.S. Navy's first aircraft carrier. In October-November 1922, she launched, recovered and catapulted her first aircraft during initial operations in the Atlantic and Caribbean areas. Transferred to the Pacific in 1924, *Langley* was the platform from which Naval Aviators, guided by Captain Joseph M. Reeves, undertook the development of carrier operating techniques and tactics that were essential to victory in World War II. Though newer, larger and faster aircraft carriers arrived in the fleet in the later 1920s, the old "Covered Wagon" remained an operational carrier until October 1936, when she began conversion to a seaplane tender.

Reclassified AV-3 following completion of this work in early 1937, *Langley* was mainly employed in the Pacific for the rest of her days. She was sent to the Far East in 1939 and was still there when the Pacific War began in December 1941. Through the early months of the conflict, she supported seaplane patrols and provided aircraft transportation services. While carrying Army fighters to the Netherlands East Indies on 27 February 1942, *Langley* was attacked by Japanese aircraft. Hit by several bombs and disabled, she was scuttled by her escorting destroyers.