

CANADIANS AT THE WRIGHT SCHOOL

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At Dayton, Ohio, a beautiful memorial pays honour to the two Wright brothers, Wilbur and Orville, who in a little bicycle shop in that city did their research in aeronautics, built their gliders and "Flyers" and later operated their flying school. A plaque on the stone parapet by the memorial commemorates some of the pioneer flyers who trained at the Wright School.

On the plaque are 119 names of men and women who were pupils in the school up to February 1916, and it may surprise those who read the names to learn that more than a third of them were Canadians by birth or residence. The first of them was Lindop E. Brown, who received pilot's certificate #267 issued by the Aero Club of America on 1 October, 1913, and was the second recruit enlisted by the Royal Flying Corps in Canada after World War I began. The other forty-one Canadians were all war-time trainees who enrolled in the Wright School to secure the pilot's certificate which was a prerequisite for admission into the Royal Flying Corps or the Royal Naval Air Service. In 1915 and 1916 the few flying schools in Canada were inadequate to handle the great number of applicants and many of them went to the United States to enroll in the schools there - the Wright School at Dayton (with a winter training centre at Augusta, Ga.), the Curtiss Schools at San Diego and Newport News, the Thomas School at Ithaca, or the Stinson School at San Antonio. Some of the candidates, impatient to get overseas before the war ended, even enrolled in

two or three schools when they found the progress of training at the over-crowded fields was too slow.

All but six of the Canadian trainees at the Wright Schools in Dayton and Augusta were candidates for the Royal Naval Air Service. For their services in World War I they received nineteen decorations (detailed below). Twelve of them gave their lives during the war and one was taken prisoner.

The Canadians included on the plaque at Wright Brothers Field were:

<u>Name and Service</u>	<u>Pilot's Cert.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Lindop E. Brown, RFC	1 Oct. 1913	Aviator's Cert. No. 267	
James M. Alexander, RNAS	22 July 1915	Killed in accident 12 Oct. 1915	
Alfred W. Briggs, RFC	30 Aug. 1915		
Arthur C. Harland, RNAS	7 Sept 1915		
George H. Simpson, RNAS	2 Oct. 1915		
Gordon F. Ross, RNAS	6 Oct. 1915	Killed in action 10 May 1918	
Kenneth G. Macdonald, RNAS	8 Oct. 1915		
Percy E. Beasley, RNAS	8 Oct. 1915		
James C. Watson, RNAS	9 Oct. 1915		
Stearne T. Edwards, RNAS	11 Oct. 1915	Died of wounds 22 Nov. 1918	
Kenneth F. Saunders, RNAS	19 Oct. 1915	Aviator's Cert. No. 353, 27 Oct. 1915	
D. Murray B. Galbraith, RNAS	3 Nov. 1915		
			DSC and Bar

A plaque commemorating the pioneer flyers trained at the Wright Brothers Flying School at Dayton. A list of the Canadians whose names are included is given above. (Photo - Courtesy of K.M. Molson).



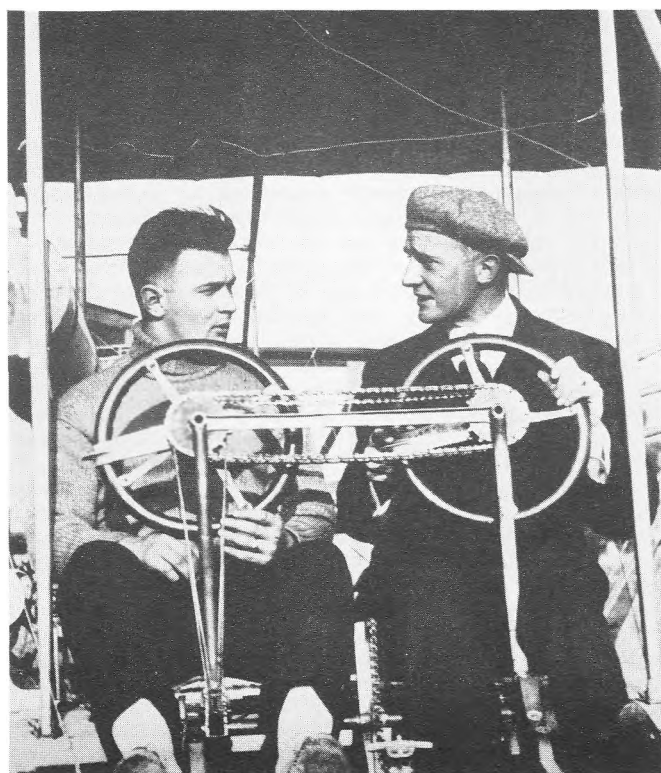
Arthur G. Woodward,RNAS	5	Nov. 1915	
John C. Simpson,RFC	9	Nov. 1915	Killed in action 1 July 1916
Walter J. Sussan,RNAS		Nov. 1915	
A. Roy Brown, RNAS, DSC and Bar	13	Nov. 1915	
Harley G. Smith, RFC	17	Nov. 1915	Reported killed with French air service 18 July, 1918
Cuthbert J. Creery,RFC	24	Nov. 1915	Killed in action 20 Oct. 1916
John O. Galpin, RNAS, DSC, DFC	24	Nov. 1915	
Basil D. Hobbs, RNAS, 2 DSO, DSC and Bar		Dec. 1915	
William E. Robinson,RNAS 7		Dec. 1915	POW 8 July 1917
J. Lindsay Gordon,RNAS DFC		Dec. 1915	Later an Air Vice- Marshal in R.C.A.F
John A. Harman,RNAS	9	Dec. 1915	
Marcel C. Dubuc,RNAS	18	Dec. 1915	
James A. Shaw,RNAS	25	Dec. 1915	
Patrick S. Kennedy,RNAS 26		Dec. 1915	Killed in accident 26 Sept. 1916
Lloyd S. Breadner,RNAS DSC	28	Dec. 1915	Later an R.C.A.F. Chief of Air Staff
Willam H. Chisam,RNAS	30	Dec. 1915	
Robert M. Weir,RNAS	30	Dec. 1915	
Paul O. Gadbois,RNAS		Jan. 1916	
Arthur Y. Wilks,RNAS	9	Jan. 1916	
Gordon S. Harrower,RNAS 9		Jan. 1916	
Gerald A. Magor,RNAS	10	Jan. 1916	Killed in action, 22 Apr. 1918.
Charles McNicoll,RNAS DSC	21	Jan. 1916	
Cecil G. Bronson,RNAS DSC	22	Jan. 1916	

Norman A. Magor,RNAS	28 Jan. 1916	Killed in accident
DSC	25 Apr. 1918	
John R. Bibby,RNAS	28 Jan. 1916	Killed in accident
	11 Jan. 1917	
Wallace E. Orchard,RNAS	Jan. 1916	Died of wounds
	2 June 1917	
Thomas C. Wilkinson,RNAS	5 Feb. 1916	
John G. Ireland,RNAS,AFC	5 Feb. 1916	
George Breadner,RNAS	6 Feb. 1916	

It is understood that Captain Frederick D. Pemberton, RFC (killed in action August 1917) trained at the Wright School in the summer of 1915; it is probable that he is the T. D. Pemberton shown on the plaque.

Students of the aviation history of World War I will recognize in the list of names some of the best flying boat pilots of the war as well as several fighter pilots who reached a score of five or more enemy aircraft and qualified as Aces. Several of those listed continued in aviation following the War. L. S. Breadner eventually became Air Marshal in the R.C.A.F. in 1940, and for the first time in the history of the R.C.A.F., the rank of Air Chief Marshal was bestowed on one of its officers on the occasion of his retirement in 1945. J. Lindsay-Gordon rose to the rank of Air Vice-Marshal in the R.C.A.F. Basil Hobbs flew with the Canadian Air Force following the war and participated in the first trans-Canada flight.

A. Roy Brown, after his career as a fighter pilot during the war, organized General Airways Limited in 1928, and headed this bush flying organization until it was absorbed by Canadian Pacific Airlines about 14 years later. Kenneth Saunders was one of the original pilots of the Fairchild Aerial Surveys (Canada), Limited, when it was formed in 1922 and has continued in aviation with Canadian Airways Limited and the Department of Transport in Canada until his retirement about three years ago.



L.S. Breadner (left) later Air Chief Marshall, Royal Air Force, under instruction from John Simpson (both



Canadians) in 1915. At right, Kenneth Saunders, who was one of the longest active pilots in history.