



WING MATE

June 2018

Newsletter of 408-437 Wing

Royal Canadian Air Force Association of Canada

The Air Force Association of Canada is a national aerospace and community service organization whose aim is to commemorate the noble achievements of the men and women who have served as members of Canada's Air Force since its inception, advocate for a proficient and well equipped Air Force and, support the Royal Canadian Air Cadets.

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June 11	Meeting @ Legion Hall
July 8	BBQ at Armour Heights (Jazz Trio)
September 10	Bangers 'n Mash @ Legion
December 10	Christmas Dinner



June

Margaret Cole

Gord Hunter

Stan Heather

Chris Skalozub

Terry Sleightholm

Sick and Visiting

Be sure to advise Barbara Newman, Fellowship Chair, if you are aware of a Wing member who is ill or in distressed circumstances.

Barbara can be reached at 416-223-7840.

President's Message

Dear Members, once again we've survived Mother Nature's fancies and are marching into summer. June 11th will be our last regular general meeting until September 10th. However as you know our **year end BBQ** is looming on the horizon at the **AHOM on 08 July**. Please mark it on your calendar and do attend. We've added something new, a live jazz Trio for your pleasure. This would be a good time to bring a friend who might be thinking of joining our Wing. Numbers of guests and names are to go to **John Wreglesworth** ASAP. **416-231-0740** the usual applies, member and one guest no charge. The Mess needs numbers and Security needs names. If you have a special dietary need (besides Prime grass-fed Angus Beef on bone china) let us know we'll try to accommodate. For vegetarians we'll have the organic chicken its non-GMO grain fed. At the end of this month I will be off to my usual summer home (tent) for two months, CFB Borden, Meaford and GRN Petawawa.

On **08 May** John Hooper, Cecile Thompson and I attended the **VE Day** celebrations at Toronto City Hall and sat in our little booth; promoting our Association with nothing to hand out. In a couple of words shameful, and shameful, there was no promotion of any kind from the City of Toronto for this event or from the Media. There were almost as many cadets taking part in this Event as other curious passers-by present. What was even more surprising is that staff working at city hall, bye-and-large, had no clue what was happening in their front yard. Some of them came out, out-of-curiosity, only because there were some rare, vintage era cars on display and a Field-Piece pointing vaguely in their direction. One councilor was present, well done Councilor Pasternak. Thanks for the sandwiches and coffee. What else is there to say? We were plainly sitting on their doorstep for about three hours. Clearly we we're not child soldiers.

But back to our 'booth', it is really tough to promote an Organization such as ours, which **clearly** needs it as silk-tongued as John is; with nothing on the table but a few back issues of the Air Force magazine. Which for once was actually of some use. As I understand the situation, it was not for the lack of asking (hoping) for promotional 'stuff' to be sent from Ottawa. The

Sea Cadets beside us had 'stuff' and people around their table; the 48th Highlander Army Cadet Unit had 'stuff' too. As we sat there 'stuff less' people merely walked by 'us' with a quick sympathetic smile towards the three old fogies resting in the shade with matching coffee cups; alright two plus Cecile. Even so 'ol silver tongue (John) succeeded in getting one new member for the Wing who paid with *foldin'* money on the spot and three other who enthusiastically took the info with the intent of passing it on to their fathers. Imagine the possibilities? **Alexa, where was my stuff?**

At the culmination, to soothe our emotional wounds we executed a tactical withdrawal to the R.C.M.I for a late lunch and some hydration, excellent as usual. Nevertheless, we commiserated, *there is a silver lining to every dark cloud*; we didn't have to unpack or repack any stuff. Just walked away.

With the ending of an era, through the culmination of **444 Wing's** operations at the end of this June, on behalf of this Wing's members I welcome as new members of our Wing:

(The unsinkable) Cecile Thompson former president 444 Wing. Paul Barker, Susan Garnet, Arthur Meade, Frank Morgan, Kathleen Parker, Peter Rebek, Denis Thompson

Regional Conference, Sarnia 18-20 May



John Wreglesworth with Banner

If you haven't sent your **membership dues** to **Marg Cole** yet please do so as soon as you can. At least call her and let her know of your intention. She has to send a cheque to Ottawa at the end of June.

Cecile Thompson receives an Award of Merit at the May Conference.



A young man was walking through a supermarket to pick up a few things when he noticed an older lady following him around. Thinking nothing of it, he ignored it and continued on. When he went to the check out line she got in front of him.

"Pardon me," she said, "I'm sorry if my staring at you made you uncomfortable. It's just that you look so much like my son, who just died recently."

"I'm very sorry," replied the young man. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

Yes," she said, "As I'm leaving, can you say Good-bye, Mother It would make me feel so much better?"

"Sure," answered the young man.

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As the old woman was leaving, he called out, "Good-bye, Mother!" She turned and waved at him, the disappeared out the door.

As he stepped up to the checkout counter, he saw that his total was \$127.50.

"How can that be?" he asked, " I only purchased a few things!"

"Your mother said you would pay for her," said the clerk.

And one more for the summer...

Men who have pierced ear are better prepared for marriage. They've experienced pain and bought jewelry. If I don't see you at the BBQ have an excellent summer...Nick.

818 Toronto Falcon Squadron With Jackie Johnston

The senior cadets had a very successful team building event SUP boarding over to the Toronto islands. Captain Abbott attended with 7 senior cadets. Fu was had by all!



A Flight of Sopwith Camels



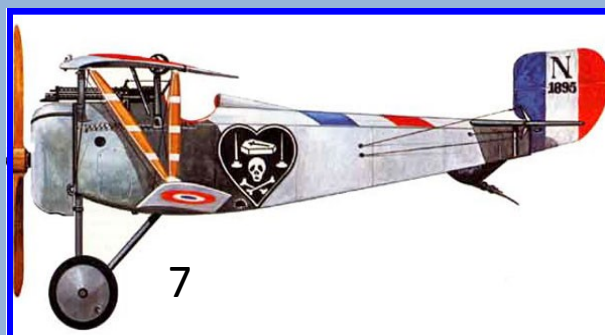
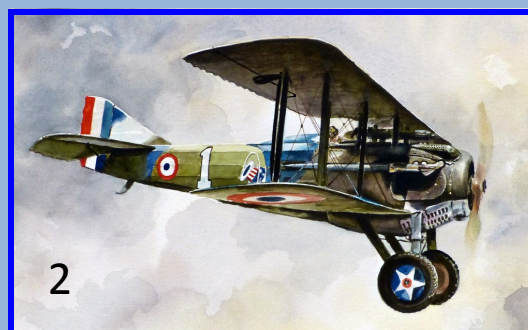


The Wing elections were held at the May meeting. Some of the officers are pictured here. From L to R: Cécile Thompson, installing officer; President Nick Czernkovich; Barbara Newman, Fellowship Chair; John Wreglesworth, Vice President/Events Co-ordinator; Jackie Johnston, Air Cadet Chair; Terry Sleightholm, Wing Mate Editor



Sopwith Camel Armament: 2 Vickers 7.7mm (.303 in) machine guns with propeller synchronizing mechanism. 4 (25 lb) bombs carried on external racks beneath the fuselage.

WW 1 Aircraft Quiz



Answers are on page 9



Canadian William Barker and his Sopwith Camel B6313

The Sopwith Camel had wicked torque and killed a lot of novice British pilots, but the Camel (5,490 produced) shot down more German aircraft (1,294) than any other Allied plane.

Its name was derived from the slight hump forward of the cockpit. Its twin 30 caliber Vickers machine guns enabled it to destroy its (by WW2 or modern standards) flimsy opponents.

The Camel grew out of the Sopwith Pup, a little fighter introduced in 1916, but which was soon outclassed by the German Albatrosses and Halberstadts. Sopwith's chief designer, Herbert Smith, began work on the Pup's successor in late 1916, and by December, the prototype "F.1" was ready to fly. Sopwith built several prototypes:

- * F.1 - powered by 110-hp (82-kW) Clerget 9Z rotary engine, first flown by Harry Hawker at Brooklands
- * F.1/1 - tapered wings and broad interplane struts
- * F.1/2 - uncertain
- * F.1/3 - powered by 130-hp (97-kW) Clerget 9B, test-flown at Martlesham Heath in March, 1917
- * N517 - ordered by the Admiralty
- * N518 - powered by new AR.1 150hp (112kW) rotary. In production, this engine became the BR.1 Bentley

Rotary) and powered the Camels delivered to the Navy.

In appearance and design, the plane was not revolutionary. A biplane combining a distinct dihedral in the lower wing with a flat upper wing, it did have a distinctive "tapered gap". The fuselage was a wooden, box-like structure, covered with aluminum up front, plywood-covered around the cockpit, and then fabric-covered back to the tail.

With its center of gravity very far forward (the engine, fuel tank, guns, and pilot were all in the front third of the plane), the aircraft was tricky to fly, but very maneuverable for a skilled pilot. While 413 Camel pilots were shot down in combat, 385 were lost in non-combat related situations, many due to the Camel's difficult handling.

The RNAS pioneered Sopwith Camels with their early aircraft carriers *HMS Furious* and *Pegasus*. Camels from *Furious*, in July 1918, bombed and destroyed the Zeppelin sheds at Tondern.

The versatile little planes were used as balloon busters and fighters. When equipped with LePrieur rockets, they were deadly against all airships. At sea, they were deployed from cruisers, battleships and even towed platforms. With Cooper bombs, they were useful as light bombers, and were also used extensively against German infantry in the trenches.

Specifications of the F.1 Camel

- Engine: 130hp Clerget 9-cylinder rotary engine
- Max. Speed: 117 MPH at sea level
- Ceiling: 19,000 feet
- Climb Rate: 10 minutes to reach 10,000 feet
- Weight: 929 lb. empty, 1,453 lb. fully loaded
- Wingspan: 28 feet
- Length: 18 ft 9 in
- Height: 8 ft 6 in
- Wing area: 231 sq ft
- Guns: Two synchronized .303 inch Vickers machine guns. The Camel was the first British fighter to mount twin forward-firing machine guns side-by-side, a natural arrangement that became standard for the RAF.

Bombs: Four 20-lb. Cooper bombs

Answers to Quiz

1. Albatross
2. SPAD S-XIII
3. AVRO 504
4. Sopwith Camel
5. Sopwith Triplane
6. Fokker Triplane
7. Nieuport -17
8. Sopwith Pup

Among the high-scoring aces to fly the Camel were the Canadian aces: Billy Barker, Raymond Collishaw, Roy Brown (who shot down the Red Baron) and Donald MacLaren.

Our fearless leader, Nick Czernovich "doin' his thing" at GRN Petawawa.

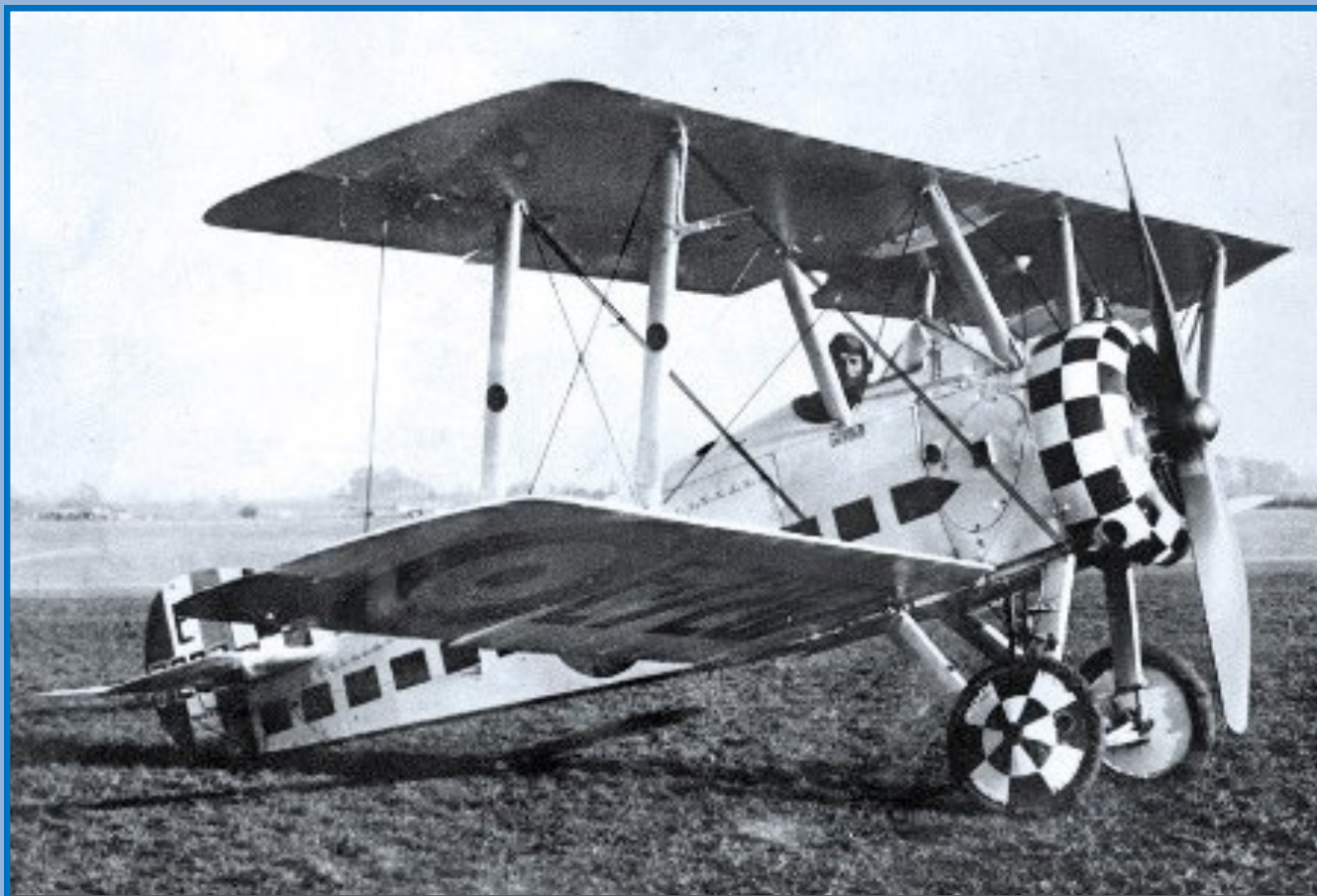
"Kidding? Me? Twice, I said stop NOT hop! The rope isn't anchored yet.

Ouch, does it hurt?"



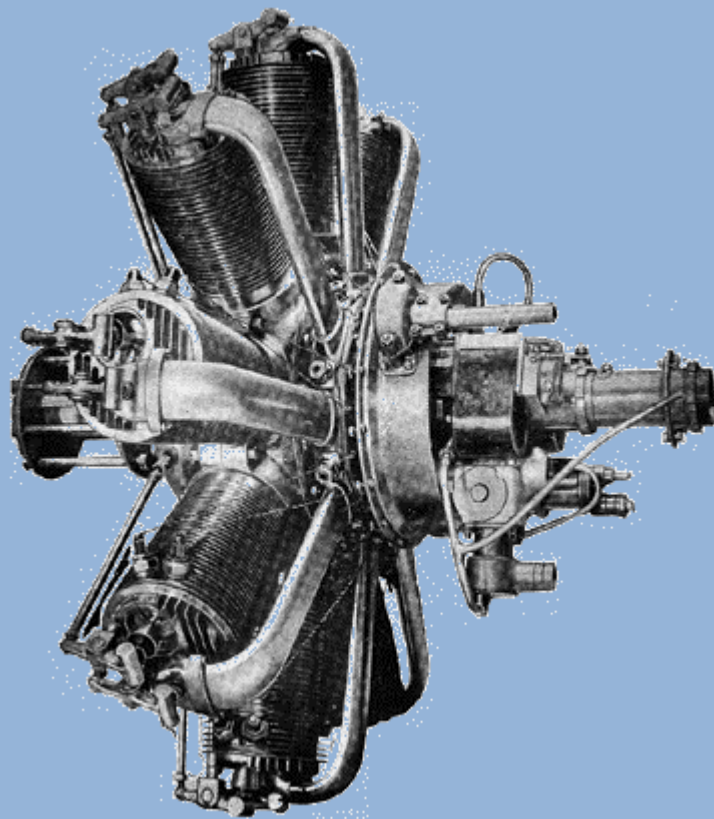


Captain A. H. Cobby , DSO, DFC and two Bars sitting in the cockpit of a Sopwith Camel He was officially credited with the confirmed destruction in combat of twenty nine machines, the highest number of any Australian airman of the First World War. The chequered paint scheme indicated its pilot was an instructor at the time.





Sopwith 110hp Clerget F1
Engine



De Lesseps Field

De Lesseps Field was a small, but important airfield in early aviation in Toronto. Opened sometime before 1910, an airfield was created from three farms by engineer William G. Trethewey (1865–1926). The airfield was located near present-day Hearst Circle and the Wishbone on a 600 acre site in York Township, just outside Weston. The grassy airfield was later used by French aviator Count Jacques Benjamin de Lesseps (1883–1927) and later renamed after him.

The property remained in the hands of the Trethewey family after the death of Trethewey, but in 1928 Trethewey's son Fred sold it to airline Skyways Limited. De Havilland Canada established their first home here in 1928 and constructed a small hangar in which to build Gipsy Moth and Tiger Moth aircraft, but left for Downsview in 1929. Skyways remained owners until some time after 1931 and the airline moved to the Malton Airport. The farm and airfield were later re-developed as residential housing. No trace of the airfield remains in the area with the exception of a plaque.

Besides aircraft manufacturing, the airfield hosted air shows starting in 1910, hosted by the Ontario Motor League.

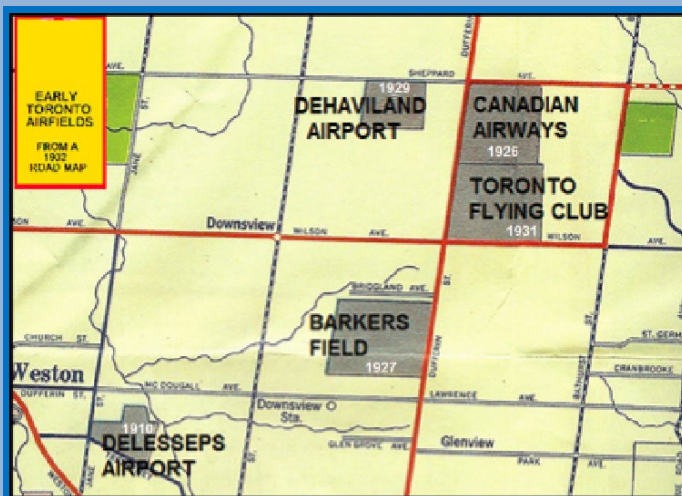
This airfield was one of many airfields in the greater Toronto area during the early 20th Century, but most of the airfields disappeared before World War II. □



Old Hangar at De Lesseps Field, Circa 1957



John at the Conference



The President makes a wish.

(May General Meeting)

1910 Toronto Aircraft Meet

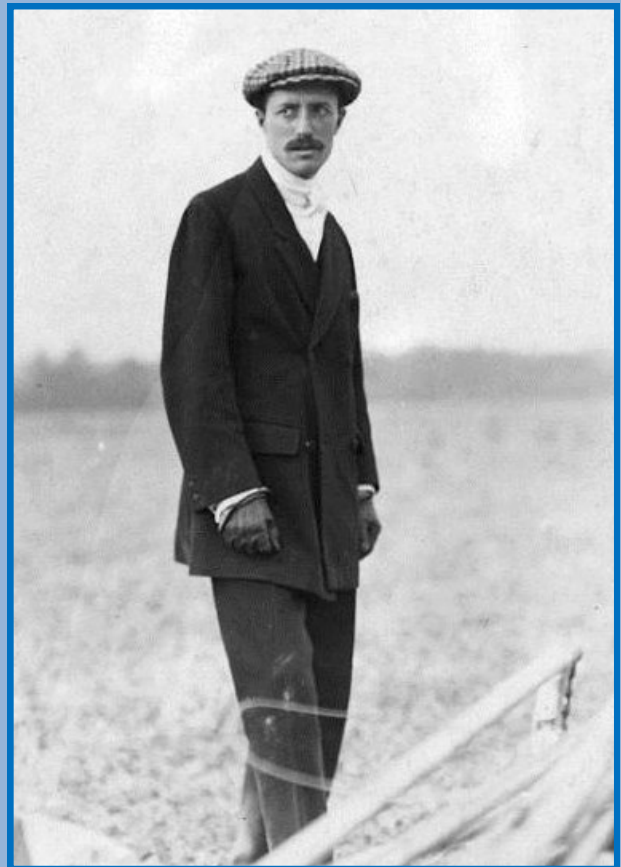
In the sight of the people of Toronto the dream of one thousand years came true last night," wrote the *Toronto Telegram* on July 14, 1910. "Rising from the crowd like a creature of life and being, a monoplane circled above over the heads of the crowd, then departed southward and westward, sailing away like some fabled bird born on the wings of the wind." The event prompting such rhetoric was the successful flight over downtown Toronto executed by Jacques de Lesseps, a French aviator participating in the Toronto aviation meet. "Toronto [has] seen the first great flight," continued the *Telegram*, "the beginning of many others that shall annihilate our mighty distance and make the man of our city a neighbour with his brother on the wave-washed shores of the Pacific."

The meet took place in July 1910, seven year years after Wilbur and Orville Wright had managed their first successful (if brief) aeroplane flight near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. In the latter years of the 1900s, daring aviation pioneers made headlines across the world, experimenting with new aircraft, and making many more flights, some more successful than others. Torontonians' first real opportunity to see the novelty of powered flight came in 1909, when Charles F. Willard provided demonstrations at Scarboro Beach Park. By some standards, Willard's flights had been of limited success; although he managed to get his Curtiss "Golden Flyer" into the air on three occasions, each of his flights ended with uneasy landings in Lake Ontario.

One week after the end of a Montreal meet, a second week-long event was held in Toronto, organized in part by the Ontario Motor League, featuring many of the same pilots and aeroplanes. The site chosen for the Toronto meet was owned by the Trethewey family, and was a functioning farm near Weston, just southeast of Jane and Lawrence. The *Globe* reported that finding a suitable Toronto venue had proven a challenge for the organizers, as the site needed to be

large and open, but also conveniently located along transportation lines, so that the planes and spectators could easily access the airfield. The *Globe* noted that "the Trethewey farm was thought of after [the thought of using] practically all open places in the city had been abandoned for some reason or other."

In addition to clearing a runway in a pea field, the organizers needed to make considerable space for the storage of aeroplanes. Other purpose-built amenities included a grandstand capable of seating 6,000, and a special restaurant, where "supper a la carte" was served for the spectators. Frequent train service was offered not only to get visitors directly to the airfield, but also to get mechanics and their parts to and from the city for necessary daily repairs. For those privileged to own motor cars, additional space on the Trethewey property was made into a parking lot, and the *Globe* reported that "the Weston road will be oiled, if the necessary permission can be obtained, so as to render the trip pleasant to automobilists."



Jacques de Lesseps at the 1910
Aviation Meet

The relative novelty of aeroplanes meant that all the participating pilots had taken up aviation quite recently. Ralph Johnstone, Walter Brookins, and Duval LaChapelle were amongst several who came on behalf of the Wright brothers, who had assembled and trained their own, touring exhibition flying team earlier in the year. Others at the meet included Gardner Hubbard, described in the *Globe* as “a wealthy millionaire of Boston, [who] will bring a machine built by the McCurdy-Baldwin people of Baddeck, Nova Scotia,” and Cromwell Dixon, a 17-year-old pilot billed as the “boy aviator,” who told the *Star* that he had been flying since he built his first dirigible balloon at age 13, but who had only first flown a monoplane at Montreal the week before.

The most prominent aviator, however, was Count Jacques de Lesseps, the son of notable French diplomat Ferdinand de Lesseps. Jacques de Lesseps had made headlines earlier in the year when he made the second successful flight over the English Channel in “Le Scarabée,” a monoplane constructed by French aviator and engineer Louis Blériot. De Lesseps had also made a name for himself at the Montreal aviation meet, when he had become the first to fly directly over a Canadian city. From the moment the Toronto meet was announced, the Toronto press gave de Lesseps considerably more coverage than the other aviators. One *Globe* article described him as “a tall, slender man with a face slightly aquiline in outline, but with a gentle, dreamy quality that, after one thinks of it, really fits in with one’s ideas as to what the pioneers in aviation should be.”

After a day’s delay—many of the aeroplanes had sustained damage during the rail trip from Montreal—it was de Lesseps who made the first flight at the Trethewey farm on July 8, 1910. According to the *Globe*, de Lesseps’ Blériot monoplane “rose into the air at 7:23 o’clock like a large bird with graceful white wings outspread, and circled three times around the course in five minutes before finally alighting to receive the plaudits of the spectators.”

Over the next few days, the aviators got a feel for the Trethewey runway, attempting a variety of short

flights, mostly in the evening when the conditions were deemed best (and when working Torontonians could find time to travel to the airfield). Amongst those who attended were mayor George Geary and Lieutenant-Governor John Morison Gibson; several Toronto newspapers reported on the meet as a society event, listing the well-to-do in attendance.

Also in attendance were representatives of the Royal Canadian Engineers, who were interested in the potential of using aeroplanes in wartime situations. On Monday, July 11, after the pilots had developed a better sense of the local flying conditions and were able to achieve greater heights, the Wright company had Ralph Johnstone drop a “bomb” from his biplane. Johnstone’s bomb was actually a ginger ale bottle, and its impact was punctuated on the ground by an explosion triggered by an electric battery, to simulate a real bomb’s impact. Other, land-based military-themed demonstrations served as entertainment in between flights. Later in the meet, the Royal Canadian Engineers and some local boy scouts staged a mock battle at a simulated fort, described by the *Telegram* as representing “the war of the future,” with firecrackers and small mines used to simulate shell fire. The *Telegram* reported that even more elaborate military demonstrations had been planned, but that “the aviation committee have decided to eliminate most of the proposed engineering features and constructions on account of the danger to both the public and the aviators.”

Later on July 11, after Johnstone achieved a height around 900 feet, de Lesseps responded by flying to a height estimated by some to be as high as 1,500 feet, and then swooped down quickly before straightening out, to the spectators’ delight. The press saw this as the beginning of a friendly rivalry between the two aviators, as the two took turns attempting various awe-inspiring demonstrations. Johnstone provided what the *Globe* described the next day as “the most amazing exhibition of aeronautical skill yet given in Toronto.” In the air for 18 minutes, the longest flight

Continued next page

of the evening, Johnstone executed a series of swoops, corkscrew descents, and other manoeuvres which "seemed to spectators a most reckless sporting with life and death," and which "looked more like the graceful progress of a giant porpoise at play than anything else."

Ralph Johnstone in His Wright Flyer



Not all the flights during the course of the meet were successful, however. On July 12, John G. Stratton had considerable difficulty with his Blériot monoplane. After failing to get airborne on multiple attempts, he finally managed to get it up to 30 feet, at which point he encountered problems with his rudder. In the words of the *Globe*, Stratton "managed to avoid two trees but came crash into a third, smashing the rudder, breaking a wing, separating the body of the machine, and nearly breaking his arm. He stayed up in the pine tree with his machine about twenty feet above the ground, badly shaken up, although he was walking around in the evening." "That is my third time now and I don't seem to mind it," Stratton told the *Star*. "I had a smash-up once in France, and once in the States."

The climax of the week came on the evening of July 13. Count de Lesseps took his monoplane up and, after making three passes through his course around the Trethewey farm, got up to an estimated 3,000 feet. He then set off in a southeast direction, toward downtown Toronto. As he reached the lake, spectators could reportedly just make him out changing course, flying east along the shore until he passed Spadina Avenue, at which point he turned back for the farm. If those in Toronto had been oblivious to

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what was going on at the airfield, they weren't any more.

"People came hurrying from all directions and necks were craned as long as Count de Lesseps and La Scarabée remained in sight," wrote the *Telegram*. "All the [streetcars] stopped, and motormen and conductors and passengers ran out into the streets to see the birdman," reported the *Star*. "One old man, who had nearly fallen in his hurry to see the aeroplane, exclaimed: 'Little did I think that before I died I would see a man fly over the city. I remember the time when I laughed at the idea that a carriage could go without horses.'"

By the time de Lesseps had turned back it was nearly 8:30 and his own mechanics, concerned that he would be unable to find the airfield in the coming dusk, lit a drum of gasoline on fire as a visual aid. Flying at a speed estimated at 70 miles an hour, de Lesseps found his way on his own, and landed to rapturous applause. "Immediately he was surrounded by enthusiastic friends," wrote the *Globe*, "who wrapped him in the tri-colour and raised him on their shoulders, carrying him before the grandstand, where three cheers and a tiger were given with a will several times over before, breaking away, he made his way to his tent."

See Them Fly!



See Them Fly!

TORONTO

Aviation Meet

OPENS FRIDAY
3.30 to 4 p.m.

Afternoon and Evening Programme Closing
at 8.30 p.m.

Count Jacques de Lesseps

Famous Cross-Channel aviator, with his famous machine, Le Scarabee, in stirring contests of the air against Wright biplanes.

SPECIAL G. T. R. and C. P. R. TRAINS

At close intervals straight to the Aviation Park, at the **Trethewey Model Farm**, Weston. Combined admission to Park and Railroad Fare only

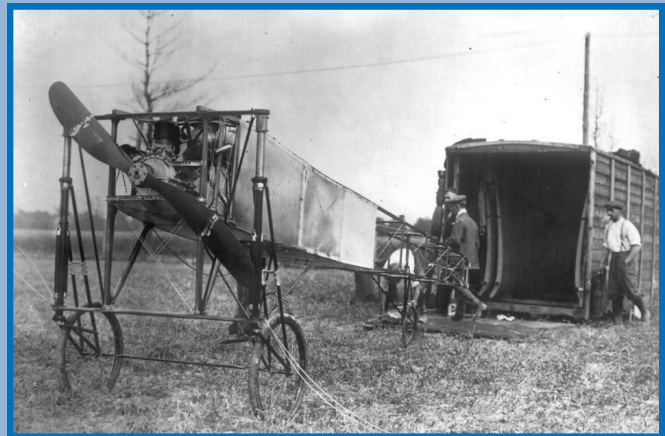
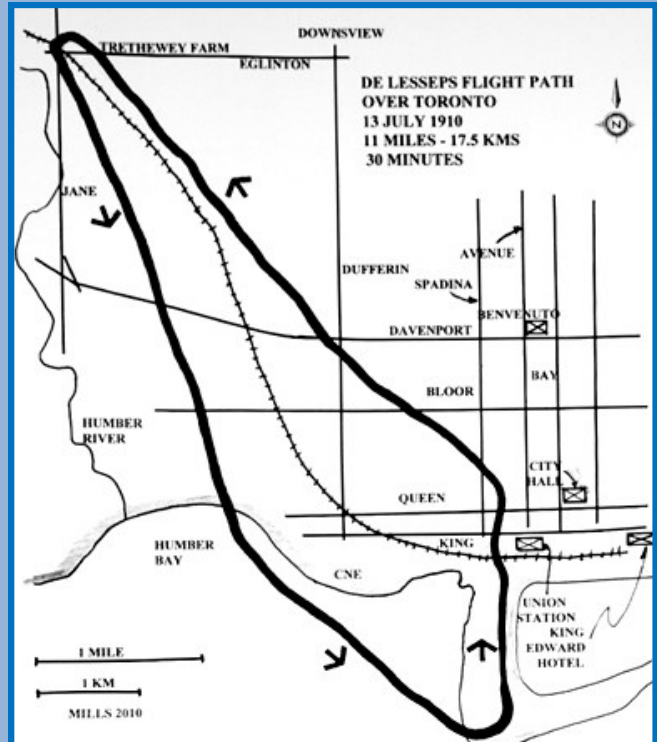
\$1.00

Tickets can be procured at Union Station.

Fellow aviator Walter Brookins noted the next day that de Lesseps had been smart in conducting his flight over the city at such a high altitude. If anything had gone wrong with the engine, Brookins explained, he would have been able to glide clear of the city to find a safe place to land, as had happened to Brookins himself at an earlier meet near Atlantic City. "There is no pleasure in it at all," he told the *Star*. "You are so high that you cannot tell how fast you are going; it is very cold; the atmosphere is so rare that it is very uncomfortable, and altogether no one would do it very often for fun."

Williams Trethewey, the owner of the farm, personally presented de Lesseps with a cheque for \$500 in recognition of his achievement, and noted that the risk in such a flight had been considerable, but certainly worth it. "I consider that flight the big thing that we have had in Canada in connection with aerial navigation," he told the *Star*.

The *Telegram* hailed de Lesseps' flight as "the greatest sight of the twentieth century in Toronto...The whirr and call of the revolving fans beat a tattoo upon the bewildered brains of the mere humans who, with their fathers, had waited from Abraham's day until now to see this thing come to pass." Flights continued at the airfield until the 16th, but it was clear that it was de Lesseps' flight over the city which had resonated most with Torontonians, and awakened them to the reality of a future with powered flight. □



Blériot Monoplane at the 1910 Meet



Canada's First Air Meet • Held on the Trethewey Farm in Toronto, Ontario - 1910