

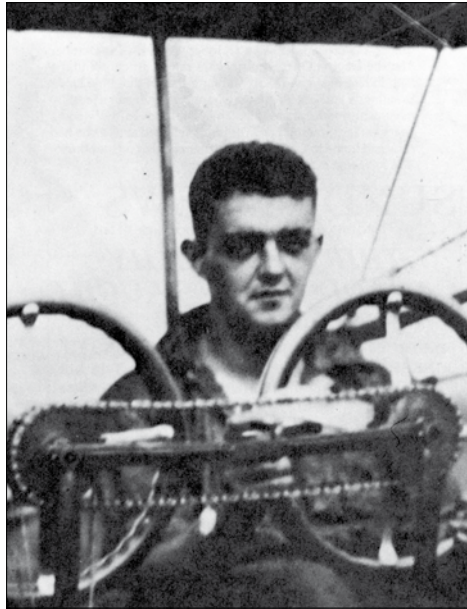
NAVAL EIGHT'S FIRST ACE

FSL DANIEL MURRAY GALBRAITH DSC*, French Croix de Guerre

by Stewart K. Taylor

THE GALBRAITH FAMILY of Carleton Place, Ontario were direct descendants from the third wave of British Isles immigrants to settle in Lanark County. By the 1890s a once flourishing lumber trade which helped develop the town was in decline, its place taken by industrial development. The parents of Daniel Murray Bayne Galbraith, who was born in Carleton Place on 27 April 1895, were among the town's 4,000 to 5,000 residents who flocked to the burgeoning factories and railway installations, in order to make a living. In time the Galbraiths profited: they lived in the better part of town and could afford to send their only son Murray to St Andrews College, in Toronto, after he decided to be a civil engineer. Like two other Carleton Place boys, Roy Brown and Stearne Edwards, later to become his chums, Murray Galbraith excelled at sports while he attended the town's public and high schools. His dark eyes and heavy eyebrows, once furrowed, rather intimidated the opposing batters forced to face his pitching when he played for the Carleton Place baseball team. But once he was old enough to drive the family auto Murray turned some of his adolescent vigour, usually invested in a good prank or two, toward automobile operation and maintenance. Before he left to attend school in Toronto during the fall of 1914 Murray was considered to be 'one of the finest motor car drivers and mechanics in the district'.

Stronger than his desire to study was the urge to fly in WWI. After the completion of one term he headed home to try and join the RNAS. Stearne Edwards and Roy Brown had the same idea. Their hopes, like hundreds of other



'Nig' Galbraith seated in a Wright 'B' machine, Wright School, Dayton, Ohio, October 1915. He was the ninth of sixteen Canadians to graduate from this school in 1915. :DND Ottawa.

young Canadians, received a jolt as only those individuals already in possession of a private pilot's licence would be considered. That just about disqualified everyone. Only one bona fide flying school existed in Canada to handle the flood of requests from eager lads like Galbraith. This was the Curtiss Flying School at Toronto. Quickly its limited resources were overtaxed and overbooked. By the summer of 1915 Galbraith, Brown and Edwards knew they had only one option left: take a train to Dayton, Ohio, and hopefully find an opening in one of the Wright School's aviation classes. They were not alone. Another nineteen Canadians arrived in Dayton about the end of August 1915, when they did. Orville Wright, the pioneer American aviator and owner of the school, made room for all the Canadians. Some of the aspirants had to wire home for more money, enough in order to sign a training agreement: \$250.00 paid up front that would

entitle a student to four hours of flight instruction. The three Carleton Place chums, soon to be known as the 'Three Musketeers', had brought along just enough funds to meet the fee but the cost of lodgings in Dayton soon eroded most of their surplus pocket money. Finances were so tight, had they been among the slower learning students who paid over \$600.00 in flight training costs before acquiring an Aero Club of America Certificate, their flying careers may never had gotten off the ground.

All during the fall of 1915 the school's two Type B Wright pushers were continually in use. To take full advantage of the calm mornings, when most of the flying took place, the students often slept in the hangars or beside the aircraft.

The 'Hobo Quartet' from Carleton Place, Wright School. Left to right: Walter Sussan, Murray Galbraith, Stearne Edwards, Roy Brown. :DND Ottawa

