

## SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AVIATION MUSEUM

### SIGNIFICANT AVIATOR PROFILES

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BROTHERS-IN-ARMS: WILFRED and EDGAR McCLOUGHRY

When the question is asked "Name two South Australian brothers who played a significant part in aviation history around the period of the Great War", the answer is usually Ross and Keith Smith and rightly so. But there were other SA-born siblings who achieved distinction during and after the conflict, such as the McCloughry brothers, both of whom went on to achieve high rank in the Royal Air Force (RAF).

#### McCLOUGHRY, W. A



Major McClaughry commanded No.4 AFC in 1918.

January 1917, in March he was promoted Captain and Flight Commander to go to France with No.100 RFC, the first night bomber unit, and in July was awarded the Military Cross (MC) for bombing at low altitudes at night.

By that time McClaughry had been posted back to join the new No.2 Australian Flying Corps (AFC) in England, and flew with the squadron as "A" Flight Commander on 21 September 1917 to France, where his mount was DH5 A9459 "D". On 2 October he led his patrol of four DH5s in their first engagement with enemy aircraft, but it was also the

Wilfred Ashton McClaughry (later changed to McClaughry), the older brother of E. J. Kingston-McCloughry, was born on 26 November 1894 at Knightsbridge in SA and educated at Queen's School in North Adelaide, Adelaide University and the School of Mines to become a law student. In 1913 he was commissioned into the Australian Military Forces (AMF) and in 1914 enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), embarking in February 1915 as Officer Commanding 2nd Reinforcements 9th Australian Light Horse Regiment to serve from May-August 1915 on Gallipoli, where he was wounded twice and invalided to England.

In March 1916 McClaughry transferred to the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) and gained Royal Aero Club (RAeC) Certificate 2368 at Hendon before graduating as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Flying Officer pilot on 21 June, after which he initially served in No.50 RFC on Home Defence duties from Dover. Mentioned in Despatches on 23



Capt A.H. Cobby, the highest scoring AFC pilot, served with No.4 AFC during 1918.

squadron's first combat loss when Lieutenant I. C. F. Agnew was forced to land A9271 behind enemy lines and became a prisoner.

McCloughry flew 22.37 operational hours with No.2 AFC before returning to Home Establishment (HE) on 26 October, then took command of No.4 AFC on 11 November and took the squadron to France on 18 December 1917. By now signing his name as McClaughry, he remained in command of No.4 until after the Armistice, and during that period was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) for conspicuous services during July 1918 and the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) in November 1918 in recognition of his squadron's fine record. Not content to stay earth-bound behind a desk he often flew on operations, including a night patrol in a Sopwith Camel on 18 May when he engaged two Goths without result. His first success came on the morning of 28 July when he destroyed an LVG two-seater while flying Camel D1920, and after the squadron re-equipped with the Sopwith Snipe he flew E8096 to destroy a Fokker DVII on 28 October. The following day he sent another Fokker down out of control to give him a score of three.

On 30 November 1918 McClaughry returned to Home Establishment with an appointment to No.1 Wing HQ and No.8 TS AFC Leighterton, followed by a move to No.2 School of Navigation and Bomb Dropping in April 1919. In August his AIF appointment was terminated and he was given a permanent commission as Squadron Leader in the RAF on Gen Birdwood's recommendation. In 1922 he attended the first RAF Staff College course where he was Commanding Officer Staff Flight, in 1931 he graduated from the Imperial Defence College, and in July 1934 he was promoted Group Captain and posted to Egypt where in July 1936 as Air Commodore he was appointed Air Officer Commanding (AOC) Aden Command.

From 1938-1940 McClaughry was Director of Training at Air Ministry and 22 September 1940-1942 was AOC the new No.9 Fighter Group, Lancashire, during which period he was appointed Companion of the Order Of the Bath (CB) and Air Vice Marshal (AVM). From 1942-1943 he was appointed AOC Air HQ Egypt, but on 4 January 1943 he was killed in an aircraft accident in the Western Desert near Heliopolis and buried in the Cairo war cemetery.

In his memory electric chimes were installed in the Congregational Church, Brougham Place, Adelaide, and his portrait by Cuthbert Orde was held by his widow.

#### **McCLOUGHRY, E. J. K.**



Edgar McClaughry (4th left) with pilots of "C" Flight No.4 AFC.

Wilfred McClaughry had a younger brother Edgar James Kingston McClaughry (later E. J. Kingston-McCloughry) who was born on 10 September 1896 at Hindmarsh, Adelaide in SA, and educated at Adelaide University, SA School of Mines and later at Trinity College Cambridge. In 1914 he entered the Army and in May 1915 was commissioned in

the AMF, then on 16 December was commissioned 2Lt in 2nd Division Engineers Australian Infantry Forces and left Sydney on 27 January 1916 with reinforcements of the 14th Field Company Engineers (FCE) for service in Egypt and France.

Wounded in November, on 1 December 1916 McClooughry transferred to the RFC and trained with Nos.11 and 39 Reserve Squadron (RS) and No.56 Training Squadron (TS) RFC from 5 December 1916-24 May 1917 before graduating as a 2Lt pilot. On 2 August 1917 he was posted to 1 Aircraft Depot (AD) in France and eleven days later joined No.23 RFC, but was soon invalided back to England after a serious crash in Spad B3534 on 18 August. Upon recovery he was posted to No.2 Aircraft Acceptance Park (AAP) and then to No.6 TS AFC where he was appointed Flight Commander/temporary Captain on 23 April 1918.

On 3 June 1918 McClooughry joined No.4 AFC in France which was under the command of his older brother Major W. A. McClooughry, and was appointed leader of "C" Flight. He almost immediately opened his scoring on 12 June by claiming the destruction of a balloon and a Pfalz DIII while flying Sopwith Camel D1961, but unfortunately Lt W. S. Martin, his companion on the balloon strafe, was shot down and killed when the pair was cornered by a number of enemy scouts on the way home. From then on he scored steadily in D1961 during the remainder of the month, claiming a Fokker DrI Triplane and an LVG two-seater destroyed and a Fokker DVII out of control.



Sopwith Camels of No.4 AFC in 1918.

On 1 July McClooughry added a pair of Pfalz DIII scouts to his score and ten days later destroyed a Rumpler and another Pfalz, then over the next three weeks claimed a mixed bag of another six which included two balloons. He scored another double at the expense of an LVG and a Fokker DVII in separate patrols on the last day of the month, but received a leg wound during the latter combat and was admitted to hospital. All his July victims were destroyed while he was flying D1961, and his successes brought his total to 17 and the award of the DFC and Bar.

McCloughry rejoined No.4 on 9 August 1918 and claimed another four victories while flying Camel E7160, the first one a balloon destroyed on 4 September and two days later an LVG out of control. His last two brought his claims to 21, a DFW and a Fokker DVII which he destroyed after a lone dawn attack on a train in the Lille area on 24 September, an action that earned him a DSO but also gave him a severe leg wound that kept him out of action for the rest of the war.

In August 1919 McClooughry left the service, graduated MA at Cambridge and went into engineering until he joined the RAF in 1922 on a short service commission. On 1 January 1926 he received a permanent commission RAF with later postings to staff courses at Andover (qualified 1929) and Camberley (qualified 1935), by which time he had hyphenated

his name to become Kingston-McCloughry. In 1934 as Flight Lieutenant he wrote an article on the Indian link in the Imperial Air Routes, in 1937 was the author of "Winged Warfare" and later wrote five books on air and defence strategy between 1947-1964.

In 1938 Kingston-McCloughry was Assistant Commandant at the RAF College at Cranwell, and in the Second World War from 1938-40 was Assistant Director of War Organisation RAF. From 1942-43 he was AOC No.44 Group RAF, from 1943-44 as Air Commodore was chairman of the AEEAF Bombing Committee which prepared plans for the air assault of Overlord invasion of Normandy.

During 1945-46 he was Air Member on the Government of India committee on defence of the NW Frontier, in 1946 Senior Air Staff Officer (SASO) RAF India Command, in 1947 AOC 18 Group, in 1948 SASO RAF Fighter Command, and in 1953 as Air Vice Marshal retired from the RAF as chief air defence officer at the Ministry of Defence

AVM E. J. Kingston-McCloughry, CB,CBE,DSO,DFC&Bar died on 15 November 1972 at Edinburgh in the UK.

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