

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AVIATION MUSEUM

SIGNIFICANT AIRCRAFT PROFILES

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AIRMEN WHO DIED IN AFC AND RFC SERVICE IN THE GREAT WAR (but are not named in the State War Memorial on North Terrace)

After Chas Schaedel provided the material for the South Australian Aviation Museum (SAAM) Anzac Centenary Commemoration book *South Australian Airmen of the Great War*, the SAAM History Group Chairman Peter Ingman compared the names listed as killed with those of airmen named on the walls of the South Australian War Memorial on North Terrace in Adelaide.

Peter found that there were 12 South Australian-born airmen who lost their lives during the war and whose names do not appear in the SAWM, so Chas has provided a brief profile of each of them in an attempt to prove their claim for inclusion.

FOWLER, David Dennys



David Dennys Fowler

Born on 20 June 1897 at Glenelg in SA before his parents resided at Wimbledon and Rottingdean in England, David Dennys Fowler was educated at Harrow and at Trinity College Cambridge before enlisting in the Royal Flying Corps (RFC). Commissioned 2nd Lieutenant (2Lt) on probation on 15 March 1916, he gained Royal Aero Club Certificate 3007 in a Maurice Farman Biplane at Catterick on 29 May 1916, was appointed 2Lt Flying Officer (FO) on 17 July, and in September was posted to No.17 Sqdn RFC operating in Salonica.

Fowler was wounded on 5 October when his BE2c was hit by anti-aircraft fire while on reconnaissance with 2Lt J. Hutchins as his observer, who escaped unhurt, but Fowler was sent to hospital at Malta. In December 1916 he was invalided back to England and upon recovery from his wound was posted to a Home Defence (HD) squadron. He was killed on 17 March 1917 when his BE2c 7181 crashed soon after take-off from Telscombe Cliffs on the first operation of No.78 (HD) Sqdn RFC, and he was buried at Rottingdean Churchyard in England.

FRANKLIN, Rodney Vernon



Rodney Vernon Franklin

Rodney Vernon Franklin was born on 21 September 1896 at Mt Barker in SA and educated at Saddleworth Primary School, Riverton High School and Gawler School of Mines. He worked at Martin's Engineering in Gawler as a draughtsman before enlisting in the AIF on 24 August 1915 to embark as Lance Corporal (L/Cpl) 10th Infantry Battalion at age 19 in HMAT A11 *Ascanius* from Adelaide on 20 October 1914

Franklin took part in the landing at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 and shortly afterwards was evacuated sick to hospital in Egypt. Upon recovery he sailed in HT *Cardigan* to rejoin his battalion on 13 June 1915 at Gallipoli, and served there until he became ill with dysentery on 10 August.

Transferred to Lemnos in SS *Georgian*, he was evacuated from Mudros on 14 August in HS *Aquitania* and admitted to No.3 London General Hospital in England.

Upon regaining his health Franklin was discharged from the AIF on 26 November 1915 after being granted an Imperial Army commission as 2Lt 10th (Reserve) Btn The King's Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment). He then transferred to the RFC, gained his wings in July 1916 and from August to December 1916 served in France with "B" Flight of No.16 Sqdn RFC flying the BE2c, and was wounded by ground fire on 27 September and again on 10 October.



A Martinsyde S.1 being prepared for flight

Awarded the Croix de Guerre (France) and recommended for the Military Cross, Franklin was taken ill and hospitalised in December 1916 and given three months sick leave, during which he visited Australia in March 1917. He returned to the RFC in Egypt in April, but on 24 June 1917 he was accidentally killed while flying in Martinsyde S.1 4250 at 58 Training Squadron (TS) RFC at Suez (there has been speculation regarding the aircraft type involved since the Martinsyde S.1. entered service very early in the war and only a few were sent to the Middle East in 1915).

GODLEE, John

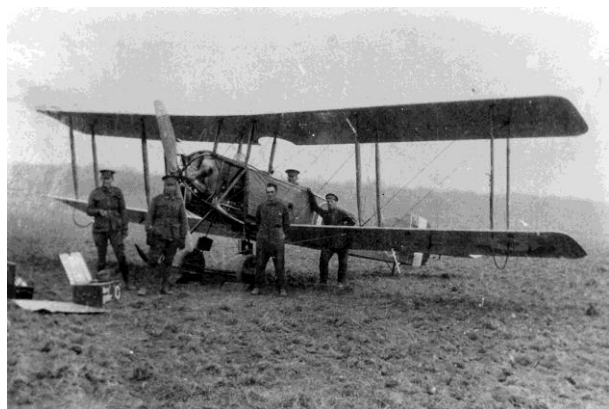
John Godlee was born in 1892 at St Peters in SA and attended Prince Alfred College where he served in the Cadets. He was employed as a stockman before he enlisted aged 22 at Guildford in WA on 21 October 1914, and he embarked at Fremantle as Trooper 10th Light Horse Regiment (LHR) 3rd LH Brigade in HMAT A47 *Mashobra* on 8 February 1915. After a period of training in Egypt he sailed from Alexandria to Gallipoli on 16 May, and served there with promotion to Corporal until he took sick on 19 August and was evacuated to hospital in Malta.



A DH2 similar to that in which John Godlee was killed

Godlee was transferred to England from Malta in HS *Fanconia* on 28 August 1915 and admitted to No.4 London General Hospital Denmark Hill on 9 September. Upon recovery he was given his discharge from the AIF on 27 December 1915 and the following day granted a commission as 2nd Lieutenant (2Lt) RFC. He trained at Gosport, gained RAeC Certificate 2478 on 20 February 1916, and graduated as 2Lt FO pilot before being posted to No.32 Sqdn RFC in France.

On 15 July 1916 while flying DH2 6006 Godlee destroyed an enemy biplane for his first victory, but four days later on 19 July he was mortally wounded in DH2 7874 during combat with a Fokker EIII which he sent down out of control. He died of his wounds several days later.



An Avro trainer of the type in which Bertram was killed

JAMES, Bertram

Bertram James was born on 8 June 1895 at Balaclava in SA and went overseas from Grange

in SA to serve in the RFC. After gaining RAeC Certificate 3419 at Netheravon on 15 August 1916 he was commissioned as FO pilot and presumably served with No.3 Sqdn RFC in France from late in the year.

James was forced down on 17 July and 19 July 1917 suffering from knee injury and shock, and was promoted to Captain in September before returning to Home Establishment in England as an instructor. On 7 May 1918 he and 2Lt G. Nash were killed in Avro 504 B8707 of No.63 Training Squadron (TS) RFC at Joyce Green in England, where James was acting CO of the squadron at the time of his death.

MUSGRAVE, Herbert



Herbert Musgrave

Herbert Musgrave was born on 11 May 1876 at Adelaide in SA and educated at Harrow in England (his father was Sir Anthony Musgrave, Governor of SA in 1875, and after his death in 1888 the family moved to England). Herbert enlisted in the British Army on 26 March 1896 and joined the Royal Engineers (RE) from the Royal Military Academy as 2Lt on 1 March 1898, with promotion to Lt in March 1899. He served throughout the Boer War, was Mentioned in Despatches (MID) on 18 February and 10 September 1901 and was awarded the Queen's Medal with 5 clasps and the King's Medal with 2 clasps. From 3 June 1901-20 September 1904 he served with the South African Constabulary with promotion to Captain on 1 March 1905, and after attending Staff College was appointed to staff positions at Malta from April 1908 to April 1912.

In October 1912 Musgrave learnt to fly at the Bristol School and on 12 November gained RAeC Certificate 357. In March 1913 he was gazetted Squadron Commander RFC and posted to Farnborough as officer in charge of experiments. Before the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 he was Deputy Assistant to the Director of Military Aeronautics, and after the start of hostilities he went to France as Major with the RFC Headquarters (HQ) Staff. He was appointed CO of the new HQ Wireless Telegraphy Unit which became No.9 (Wireless) Squadron before the end of 1914, and this unit was ultimately responsible for the development of the RFC system. For his work in this area Musgrave was awarded a Distinguished Service Order (DSO) on 18 February 1915 and was also Mentioned in Despatches, before returning at his own request to the Army staff in March.

Musgrave was MID again on 1 January 1916, but was badly wounded in August and remained out of action for some time. Upon his recovery he went back to the front as a member of the Royal Engineers Staff at HQ 2nd Corps, but was killed in action on 2 June 1918 while accompanying a patrol inside the German lines.

PORTER, Gavin Alexander

Gavin Alexander Porter was born on 23 June 1891 at Parkside in SA and educated at Guildford Grammar School in WA. He went to England in 1905 and again in 1910, and in 1914 enlisted in the Royal Field Artillery (RFA) when the First World War began. After seeing early action in France with the Artillery he gained experience with the RFC as an observer before training as a pilot.



A BE2c bombed up and ready for action

Porter gained RAeC Certificate 1907 on a Maurice Farman Biplane with the Farman school at Etampes on 29 April 1915 before completing his pilot training in England. Posted to No.13 Sqdn RFC and promoted to Captain and Flight Commander (Flt Cdr), he served in France until 5 December 1915, when he and 1AM H. J. Kirkbride were shot down in BE2c 4092. Kirkbride was killed during the fight, Porter died next day, and they were both buried with full military honours in Havrincourt Cemetery before being transferred later to Aichet-le-Grand Cemetery. There is speculation as to whether their victor was Oberleutnant Ernst Fr von Althaus or Ltn Gustav Leffers, each of whom flew a Fokker Monoplane during that period of the war.

RANDELL, Cosma Lake



Corporal Cosma Randell wearing pilot's wings, presumably on graduation to Sergeant Pilot.

Cosma Lake Randell was born on 24 October 1892 at Gumeracha in SA, and was employed as a plumber when he enlisted at Adelaide on 7 September 1915. He joined the 14th Reinforcements (Rfts) 3rd Field Company Engineers (FCE) and later transferred to 43rd Infantry Battalion, but was discharged from the AIF at his own request on 30 April 1916 and made his own way to England, where he joined the Royal Flying Corps (RFC).

Whereas all Australian Flying Corps (AFC) pilots were recognised as commissioned officers, the RFC included pilots with the non-commissioned rank of Sergeant, and Randell graduated as Sgt pilot on 30 August 1916. He was posted to France and flew with No.22 Sqdn RFC, but on 23 August 1917, exactly a year after gaining RAeC Certificate 3415, Randell and his observer 1Air Mechanic (1AM) J. V. Hurley were killed when their Bristol

F2B Fighter B1101 was shot down in flames during a combat with five enemy aircraft. Randell's older brother Wentworth also flew as a pilot, but as a 2Lt in No.4 Sqdn AFC. He was forced to land his Sopwith Camel behind enemy lines in February 1918 when his engine failed. He narrowly escaped being killed by the German troops he had just been strafing and spent the rest of the war as a prisoner.



A Bristol Fighter of Randell's 22 Squadron

SUTHERLAND, Alan D'Arcy

Alan D'Arcy Sutherland in SA was born on 14 April 1889 at Adelaide in SA and educated at St Peter's College. Living at Minlaton on Yorke Peninsula with his wife and two children, he worked as a stock agent and auctioneer before enlisting on 12 August 1915. From 16 October he attended Officers School and on 16 December was commissioned 2Lt, with further promotion to Lt on 16 December 1915.

Sutherland embarked with 2nd Rfts 48th Inf Btn in HMAT 60 *Aeneas* on 11 April 1916, and served in Egypt for about two months before embarking again to arrive in England on 16 June 1916. After a period as Adjutant for an AIF Training Battalion he transferred on 22



Sopwith 1 1/2 Strutters served as bombers, fighters and trainers

October 1916 to the RFC and was posted to No.2 Flying Corps School of Instruction at Oxford (later No.2 School of Military Aviation (SMA)).

Sutherland completed his Ground School examinations at Oxford and then commenced his flying training, during which he was killed in Sopwith 1½ Strutter 7810 on 28 February 1917 at CFS Upavon when the wings failed as he pulled out of a dive too quickly (on 22 April 1938 his son PO Lancelot Sutherland, adjutant of No.2 RAAF at Laverton, was killed in the crash of Bristol Bulldog A12-2 at Richmond in NSW while rehearsing for an air display to be held next day).

TURNER, Richard George



Richard George Turner

transferred from 2nd Btn to 1st Australian Division Army Ordnance Corps on 18 April and promoted Cpl.

Turner was attached to 1st Aust Dvn HQ on 6 September 1916, and after volunteering to join the RFC was posted to England to begin training at RFC Cadet Btn Denham on 16 November. This was followed by a course at No.3 SMA Brasenose College Oxford from 26 January 1917, on completion of which he was discharged from the AIF on 16 March 1917 and commissioned 2Lt RFC on probation the next day.

Turner received flying instruction at No.47 Reserve Squadron (RS) RFC Waddington and at No.37 RS RFC Scampton, and it was at this latter station that he was accidentally killed on 4 May 1917 at the age of 23 when he crashed in RE8 A3497 of No.37 RS. The Court of Inquiry found that the accident was due to a lack of judgement by the pilot which caused the machine to go into a spinning nose dive on a turn.

WALD, Alexander

Alexander Wald was born on 19 June 1893 at Petersburg (later Peterborough) in SA, and became a draughtsman before enlisting on 19 August 1914 as number 2773 to join Divisional Ammunition Column (DAC) at Morphettville in SA. He enlisted again on 10 December 1914 as number 1759 and joined Dvnl Ammunition Park (DAP) in Melbourne, from where he embarked at age 21 in HMAT A40 *Ceramic* on 22 December 1914 as Gunner (Gnr) 301 Motor Transport (MT) Aust Army Service Corps (AASC) DAP. On 14 May 1915 he sailed from Alexandria to serve with 8th AASC on Gallipoli, where he

Richard George Turner was born on 30 January 1894 at Jamestown in SA and educated at Jamestown High School. He worked at the Union Bank before enlisting at Sydney in NSW as Private(Pte) 2nd Inf Btn on 17 August 1914, embarking at age 20 in HMAT A23 *Suffolk* on 18 October to land in Egypt on 8 December. He sailed from Alexandria in HMT *Derfflinger* on 5 April 1915 to take part in the landing at Gallipoli on 25 April, and the next day was wounded in the right leg and evacuated to No.17 AGH Alexandria in HS *Ionian*.

Discharged to duty from Convalescent Camp Mustapha, Turner rejoined his unit at Gallipoli on 18 May 1915 and after the evacuation returned to Alexandria in HMT *Huntsgreen* on 28 December. He sailed from Alexandria on 22 March 1916 to serve in France, where he was



The RE8 reconnaissance biplane and trainer

received a back wound on 28 June that required treatment at a Field Ambulance post for several days.

On 23 October 1915 Wald was attached to Anzac Corps HQ as a clerk, served in Egypt until sailing from Alexandria on 22 March 1916 to join the Australian forces in France, and after service from 21 April with 1st Dvn HQ AIF as a draughtsman answered the call for volunteers to join the RFC. Posted to England on 8 November 1916 and admitted to RFC Officers Cadet Btn, he commenced his instruction in aviation from 26 January 1917 at No.3 SMA Brasenose College Oxford, and was discharged from the AIF on 16 March 1917 on being commissioned 2Lt in the RFC.



Alexander Wald flew FE2b bombers with distinction in France

Wald received flying instruction at No.39 RS RFC Montrose and No.98 Depot Squadron RFC Rochford, and having graduated as a 2Lt pilot received a posting to No.100 Sqdn RFC in France, where he flew his first operation on the night of 25-26 July 1917. On 18-19 February 1918 Wald and his observer Lt S. M. Duncan in a FE2b made a low level attack on the railway station at Trier, dropping two 112-pound bombs and phosphorous canisters and flying so low that the anti-aircraft guns were unable to fire for fear of hitting the town.

That incident was mentioned in the gazettement of his Military Cross (MC) award, which stated:-*For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He carried out a large number of night bomb raids on enemy headquarters, aerodromes and railways with great success. Many of these flights were carried out in bad weather and at very low altitudes. On one occasion, though he had engine trouble and his radiator burst when he was over the enemy's lines, he continued his flight and bombed a railway station from 1,500 feet. He set a fine example of determination to his squadron.*

After Wald completed his tour of duty in France he was posted back to Home Establishment in England. This was before the above citation was published in the London Gazette Supplement for 16 August 1918, but unfortunately on 11 August 1918 Alexander Wald had been killed in England in the crash of FE2b C9793 of No.36 (HD) RFC.

WARREN, Harry Collier

Harry Collier Warren was born on 20 November 1893 at Port Pirie in SA and educated at St Peter's College in Adelaide, from where he went to WA and enlisted at Blackboy Hill on 17 August 1914. He embarked from Fremantle in HMAT A7 *Medic* as Driver (Dvr) 3rd Field Artillery Brigade (FAB) 8th Battery on 31 October 1914 and took part in the entire Gallipoli campaign, after which he spent several months in Egypt as a Bombardier (Bdr) before sailing from Alexandria to continue his active service in France.



Avro 504K, one of the Avro trainer types

On 26 November 1916 Collier transferred from the Artillery to the AFC to train as a Cadet, initially undertaking and passing his ground school studies at No.1 SMA Reading. He had flying training at 48

RS RFC Waddington before being posted to No.3 Sqdn AFC at South Carlton for further instruction, and it was there 4 April 1917 that he was killed in the crash of Avro 504B B389 when it spun into the ground from a height of about 150 feet when the rudder control locked. His instructor Lt C.P. Lowry RFC survived the crash although injured, but no definite reason was found for the rudder fault.

WEST, Percy Francis



The BE2e was widely used in the Middle East during the war

Percy Francis West was born on 10 August 1894 at Largs Bay in SA, joined the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) on 4 August 1914, and was serving as Yeoman of Signals RAN Reserve (RANR) when he enlisted for overseas service on 2 September 1915. Appointed Able Seaman Driver 6 Rfts RAN Bridging Train (RANBT) at Melbourne, he embarked at age 21 in RMS *Moldavia* on 5 October for Egypt, and sailed from Alexandria on 13 November to join the 1st RANBT on Gallipoli.

West landed at Suvla Bay on 8 December 1915 and took part in the Bridging Train operations that facilitated the AIF evacuation from the Peninsula, after which he returned to Alexandria from Mudros on 20 January 1916. He was promoted Leading Seaman on 31 March and Petty Officer on 8 April while the Bridging Train continued its work in the Suez Canal area, but late in the year it became evident that the Train was soon to be disbanded and its members were to be transferred to other service branches.

On 26 November 1916 West transferred to the Officers Training School at Zeitoun, and on 27 February 1917 was discharged from the AIF and appointed 2Lt on probation RFC Special Reserve (SR). He underwent flying training in Egypt and graduated as 2Lt pilot before embarking on 10 June to sail to Basrah in Mesopotamia, where he took up a posting with No.30 Sqdn RFC which was conducting operations against Turkish forces and rebel Arab tribes.

West joined the squadron on 6 July 1917 and took part in the bombing, reconnaissance and photography missions being carried out despite the intense heat at that time. On 12 September he was conducting a reconnaissance in a BE2e with Lt F.G.O Dickinson as his observer when their escorting BE2e suffered engine trouble. The escort pilot, Lt Page, was forced to land in enemy territory, but despite mounted Arabs being in the near vicinity, West landed and picked him up and flew him back to base.

Bombing missions were carried out when targets were discovered, and on 24 October 1917 West carried out an attack when he dropped eight 20 pound bombs on enemy camps. Towards the end of the year the squadron began to receive RE8 machines to replace the venerable BE2e, but early in 1918 West succumbed to the harsh desert conditions and was struck off the squadron strength on 28 January 1918. Evacuated to hospital in India, he died there on 24 March 1918, and his name is commemorated on the 1914-1918 Memorial at Kirkee (also known as Khadi) which is a Military Cantonment adjoining Poona above Bombay.

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