

The Arthur Roy Brown Story

The Brown Family and Early Years in Carleton Place

Arthur Roy Brown was born at home, 146 Judson Street in Carleton Place, on December 23, 1893.

He was the first son and third child of James Morton Brown (1863 – 1926) and Mary Elizabeth Brown, nee Flett (1864 – 1939).

He had two older sisters, and two younger brothers:

Margaret “Maggie” Rutherford Brown (1887 - 1933)

Bessie Church Brown (1890 - ?)

Arthur Roy Brown (1893 -1944)

John Horace Brown (1896 – 1919)

Howard Morton Brown (1905 – 2001)

In the 1800s Carleton Place came to a turning point with the cessation of seasonal lumbering on the Mississippi River. The increase in railroad trades and woolen and flour mills soon filled the void.

Carleton Place was incorporated as a town [from a village], effective January 6, 1890.

The Brown family had been in Carleton Place since 1870 when Roy’s Grand-father Horace Brown came to town and operated the H. Brown and Sons flour mill on Mill Street. They were descendants of Empire Loyalists who came to Lanark during the American Revolution.

James Morton Brown, Roy’s father, took over the business of operating the flour mill, and the town’s electrical generating mill for many years before that part of the business was transferred to the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario. He was also a prominent figure in Carleton Place as a town councilor, public school trustee, Zion Presbyterian church treasurer and public utilities commissioner.

Education & Sports

Growing up in a reasonably affluent and influential family in Carleton Place, Roy attended public school in Carleton Place, probably at the old Central School, where his sisters attended before him. It was located on the site of the current Carleton Place post office.

All but Roy's final year at high school were attended here at the Carleton Place High School. He did well in high school, but in order to take a place in the family businesses he transferred to a business school to study accounting. Following this course, he wanted to continue on to university to study business administration, but he needed his high school matriculation, which he technically didn't have. After the commercial school course attended at Ottawa, Ontario, he completed his final high school year in Edmonton, Alberta.

In Edmonton Roy lived with his uncle and aunt, Mr. Will F. Harry Brown & Mrs. Blanche Brown at 10033, 108th Street, and graduated from Victoria High School.

Roy was quite a prominent athlete and while growing up in Carleton Place he played on the town's baseball and hockey teams. His hockey skills were good enough to get him an invitation to try out with the then Ottawa Senators, but his father dissuaded him, particularly as he already had a bad injury from hockey.

While attending Victoria High School in Edmonton (1914?), Roy was also a member of the schools basketball (Captain), foot ball and hockey city championship teams, where he also met and became friends with another famous Canadian WWI pilot and later bush pilot, Wilfred "Wop" May, and who was to play a key role in the Von Richthofen affair.

Flying School and Enlistment

In April of 1915 Roy wrote a letter to his father from Edmonton explaining his reasons for wanting to join the armed forces “to go to war”, and seeking his father’s approval and advice. Sometime after this letter in 1915 Roy returned to Carleton Place.

When the war broke out in 1915 Stearne Tighe Edwards, a very close friend of Roy’s returned to Carleton Place from Fort Nelson, B.C. in 1915. He found Carleton Place boiling with the war. Roy Brown had returned from Edmonton as well. At that time an officer of the Royal Naval Air Service was in the east, recruiting young men for that branch. Brown, Edwards and two other friends, Daniel Murray Galbraith and Walter Sussan of Carleton Place decided to join together. All four ran into the same service policy problem.

At that time the R.N.A.S. was accepting only those persons who already had a private pilot’s license. The four looked around for a flying school at which to train. The nearest one, the Curtiss School in Toronto was full, so they applied, at their own expense, to enter the Wright School of Aeronautics at Dayton, Ohio.

As a young man Brown was outgoing and intellectual. By 1915 he was an Officer Cadet in the Army Officers' Training Corps, but he was fascinated by the new technology of flight. He and his friends looked into it as it seemed a better way to go to war than the horror that was unfolding in the trenches. At one time during the war, a fighter pilot’s average life expectancy was around two weeks. His father said no to the RFC, as the casualties were starting to mount in alarming fashion, whereas the RNAS seemed to have it relatively easier flying patrols along the British, French and Belgian coasts.

The story of Carleton Place’s Airmen really begins in the Fall of 1915 when Lloyd Breadner, Stearne Edwards, Roy Brown and Murray Galbraith were amongst those from Carleton Place receiving pilot’s lessons at the Wright School of Aviation in Dayton, Ohio.

They were in good company, for the Wright School was handling the largest class in its history. Twenty-two other Canadians had descended upon the school with the same idea, and throughout the fall of 1915 the school’s two “B” pusher aircraft were in constant use. A number of other Carleton Place pilots attended the Wright School around the same time.

The whole affair had many aspects of a picnic, with many students sleeping in the hanger and walking to near-by farms for meals. It was no cakewalk, however. The course alone cost \$ 250.00 for 240 minutes of instruction, and total costs exceeded \$600.00, quite a sum of money at the time. First they also had to sign papers absolving the Wright Brothers if any of them was injured or killed while flying one of the aircraft that were terribly fragile and unstable in the air.

The aircraft would go up for a few minutes with an instructor and a student, then land, and a brief discussion of the flight would take place with the students grouped around the plane. Most of the instruction was carried out in this manner on the ground, as little could be done in the air with the roar of the engine immediately behind the seats. The final test for a license consisted of three solo flights totaling 40 minutes and two figure eights. If one could take the machine into the air, fly around the field and land without killing oneself or destroying the aircraft, he was considered to have “passed” and to be a pilot.

Brown obtained his Aero Club of America Certificate number 361 on November 13th, 1915. Edwards on October 13th and Galbraith on November 3rd.

In the future, when learning of the numbers of young men of the town who served with the British Aerial Services, some editorials of the period would dub Carleton Place ‘A Nursery of the Air Force’.

On 29th of October of 1915, both Roy Brown and his close friend Stearne Tighe Edwards were to have been initiated into the St. John’s Masonic Lodge of Carleton Place as Freemasons, at a special meeting prior to their expected departure for England. It is presumed that both were accepted as Apprentice Masons, even though Roy was still in Ohio and did not obtain his pilots license until Nov. 13th.

World War One Service

In 1912, the British had formed the Royal Flying Corps with two wings, one attached to the army, the Military wing, and one with the Navy, the naval wing. In 1914 the latter became the Royal Naval Air Service. On February 7, 1915, the British government requested Canadian authorities to recruit candidates for the British flying services. As the Royal Flying Corps was not accepting candidates at the time, all of Carleton Place's first aviators joined and served with the Royal Naval Air [Service]. The two wings on April 1st, 1918, were joined to become the Royal Air Force.

When war broke out in 1914 there were very few who thought aircraft would be engaged in battles or bombing the enemy. . . Yet within a year of the opening of hostilities in 1914 military leaders were requesting their governments for more and more pilots and planes. This was a complete reversal of earlier thought re[garding] the role of aircraft in war. The war in the air was on.

On February 7th of 1915, due to the urgent pressures for aviators, the British War Office requested the Canadian Government amongst other Commonwealth nations to enlist candidates for the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service

Armed with their certificates, Brown, Edwards and Galbraith, again approached the R.N.A.S., and this time were signed on and enlisted. Brown and Galbraith sailed for England on November 22nd on the American Line ship the Finland, with Edwards preceding them on November 15th. They were reunited at the training establishment at Chingford, England. There they trained on Maurice Farmens, Avros, and BE2c's, learning military flying and bomb dropping. After extensive training there they went their separate ways, but their paths would cross again in France, Brown and Edwards eventually flying in the same squadron.

During his training at Chingford, on 2 May 1916, Brown crashed his Avro 504, emerging apparently unscathed, though next morning he experienced severe back pain as he had in fact broken a vertebra. He spent two months in hospital and in September 1916 was posted to Eastchurch Gunnery School. In January 1917, he was sent to Cranwell to complete advanced training.

In March 1917, Brown was posted to No. 9 Naval Squadron, flying coastal patrols off the Belgian coast in Sopwith Pups. The squadron's chief task was the defense of the North Sea fleet and in driving off German seaplanes as well occasional bombing raids. In the event Brown was taken ill until June, missing what the RFC came to call "Bloody April", when the new German aircraft, the Albatross DIII, wreaked havoc among Allied aircraft.

Once recovered from his illness Brown was posted to "B" Flight No. 11 Naval Squadron, primarily a training squadron. His stay there was initially brief however; the following month, July 1917, brought him a posting to No. 4 Naval Squadron. He was moved back

to No. 11 Naval Squadron later the same month, flying a variety of Sopwith aircraft (including Pups, Triplanes and Camels), at the Frontier Aerodrome near Ostend on the Belgian frontier, just as the Germans were stepping up their observations in the area, greatly increasing the number of dogfights. The RFC was bleeding men and machines so the RNAS stepped up their combat activity from coastal patrols to air fighting over France.

Brown finally opened his aerial score on 17 July 1917 when, flying a Sopwith Pup on patrol, he brought down a German Albatross DIII south-east of Nieuport.

Promoted to Flight Lieutenant Brown brought down up to three further enemy aircraft while with No. 11 Naval Squadron; however, since these were not confirmed 'kills' they were not officially credited to Brown and did not form part of his official tally.

No. 11 was disbanded in mid-August 1917, and Brown returned to No. 9, equipped with the Sopwith Camel, where he scored his 2nd victory in September 3, 1917. He scored his 5th victory on October 13, 1917 to become an ace. All of Brown's remaining air successes were while flying Sopwith Camels.

On 6 October 1917 Brown was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) in recognition of his aerial success and in particular for coming to the aid of a lone allied pilot under fire from four German Albatrosses. Even though his own aircraft's guns had jammed he raced to the pilot's aid, forcing the German aircraft to scatter as he flew directly through them: a remarkable act of courage. Ten days following the award of his DFC Brown was appointed Acting Flight Commander. He received the award of the Distinguished Service Cross on November 2, 1917.

London Gazette No.
War Office,
2nd November, 1917

His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to approve of the following award to the undermentioned officer, in recognition of his gallantry and devotion in the field:

AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

T/2nd For the excellent work he has done on active service. On the 3rd September, 1917, he attacked a two-seater Aviatik, in company with his flight. The enemy machine was seen to dive down vertically, the enemy observer falling over on the side of the fuselage shot.

On the 5th September, 1917, in company with formation, he attacked an Albatross scout and two-seater, driving them away from our lines. One machine was observed to go down apparently out of control.

On the 15th September, 1917, whilst on patrol, he dived on two Aviatiks and three Albatross scouts, followed by his flight. He dived several times and picked out one enemy scout, firing about 200 rounds, when the enemy machine went down out of control, spinning on its back.

On the 20th September, 1917, whilst leading his flight, he dived on five Albatross scouts. Flight Lieutenant Brown picked out one enemy machine and opened fire. One of his guns jammed, but he carried on with the other. The enemy machine went down out of control and over on its back and remained in that position for about twenty seconds, whilst Flight Lieutenant Brown continued firing until his other gun jammed. The enemy machine then disappeared in the clouds, still on its back.

Another officer of the same patrol was later followed by four enemy machines, as he was separated from the formation. Both Flight Lieutenant Brown's guns were jammed, but despite this he dived on the enemy machines and drove them off, thus undoubtedly saving the other pilot's life.

Along with long time friend Stearne Edwards, Brown was sent on Home Leave to Canada from 11 November 1917 until 29 January 1918. There was more to this than just Home Leave for the two Carleton Place air Aces. On December 17th, 1917 both Brown and Edwards set off from Carleton Place for Washington, D.C. with their flying cloths in their baggage. When they returned to Carleton Place at the end of the week, neither said anything about the trip, other than it was a military secret. The time frame suggests that the trip may have had a connection with information which the U.S. Joint Army and Navy Technical Board needed concerning the war in the air, the performance of German aircraft, and quality of their crews.

Upon Roy's returned to England, his squadron was refitted with the new BR1 Camels. In February 1918 he was made a flight leader. A confidential report on him at the time, stated that he was...

..”a very good flight leader and fearless pilot, with good ability to command.”

Described as a "kind, compassionate, and honourable man," Brown apparently did his best to watch over the novices in his flight, through their first combat flights as safely as he could. He was known for circling outside of engagements, after leading the initial attacks so he could come to the aid of those who got in trouble. Like many WWI pilots, he preferred to think that he was killing the machines, not men. He worried about those pilots in his flight, as well as his comrades, and he suffered when they were lost. Brown never lost a pilot from a flight he commanded.

During the German offensive of March 1918, Allied losses were very high. Brown was flying at least 2 missions a day on the average, as well as trying to provide extra training for the new pilots fresh out of flight schools and now placed in his charge. The strain of sustained combat was beginning to show on him. Raymond Collishaw noted on an early April visit that Brown looked exhausted: he had lost 25 pounds, his hair was prematurely turning grey, and his eyes were bloodshot and sunken. Not only was the food bad, but Brown had eaten contaminated rabbit that severely upset his gastro-intestinal tract. On top of everything else, Naval 9's base at Bertangles was a cheerless place. "When they landed they had no diversions, no hot water, just tents in a muddy field. Every morning the field was shrouded in thick fog. The spring was dreary, with cold rain and wind." Yet against Collishaw's suggestions, Brown refused to quit flying, and shot down another two aircraft on 11 and 12 April.

With the amalgamation of the RFC and the RNAS into the new Royal Air Force (RAF) at the start of April 1918 Brown's Squadron was renamed 209 Squadron. He was also appointed Captain under the new rank structure and the squadron was posted to the Somme area. As a consequence of the initial sweeping success of the German spring advance of 1918 209 Squadron occupied no fewer than six different aerodromes from 20-29 March 1918, each time being driven further back by continued German successes.

Flying an increasing number of high-tension missions each day, Brown scored kills on 11 and 12 April in the Somme region. This brought his tally to nine. His tenth and final success came some nine days later on the morning of 21 April 1918: his victim was Baron Manfred Von Richthofen.

21 April 1918

The day started cold and foggy, but cleared by 9 A.M., so both British and German aircrews warmed up their fighters. Camel BR 1s for the British, Fokker Dr. I triplanes and Albatross DVs for the Germans. Richthofen flew in his standard red coloured triplane, Brown in his now-khaki coloured Camel.

Both flights left their respective aerodromes around 9:15. The Germans spotted and attacked a pair of Australian RE8s, but lost a triplane before the Australians escaped. The pilots of Jasta 11 reformed and headed towards the British lines. Brown spotted the Germans first and motioned for inexperienced “Wop” May to stay high out of danger. Brown then wobbled his wings, the signal for attack, and led 209 Sqn to down the fight. When May had seen Brown, he remained at 12,000 feet and circled as instructed. When an enemy machine flew by underneath him, he let it go, again obeying instructions; but, when a second one appeared, almost as a sitting duck, he dived, fired, missed and followed it right into the thick of the fight. Happy with surviving his first battle May headed for Allied lines. But Richthofen had spotted May as the pilot who dove on his cousin Wolfram. Richtofen tracked May as he left the melee and followed him.

May gave his own impressions as follows: ‘ . . . I thought the best thing to do was to go into a tight vertical turn, hold my guns open and spray as many of them as I could. Through lack of experience I held one of my guns open too long; it jammed and then the other. I could not clear them so I spun out of the mess and headed west by the sun for home. After I had levelled out, I looked around, but nobody was following. Feeling pretty good at having extricated myself, the next thing I knew, I was being fired at from behind! . . . ’

The first May knew that he was in trouble was when von Richthofen's bullets smashed into his Camel. As a novice he had not developed the observational techniques required to stay alive in the air. He looked quickly over his shoulder to see a scarlet triplane on his tail firing at him. He spun his Camel to lose the triplane and then zigzagged after he came out of the spin. Von Richthofen stuck to him firing and matching the novice's moves.

"I kept dodging and spinning until I ran out of sky and had to hedgehop over the ground. Richthofen was firing at me continually. The only thing that saved my life was my poor flying. I didn't know what I was doing myself and I do not suppose that Richthofen could figure out what I was going to do. We came over the German lines, troops firing at us as we went over. This was also the case coming over the British lines."

Brown had been engaged on the fringe of the fight with two triplanes. He successfully shook these off and flew towards the main fighting. It was then that he saw May drop out – and von Richthofen follow. He dived in pursuit. He was a ways off and May had to fend for himself for several minutes.

Von Richthofen was catching up with May, moving in close and following every evasive turn as he waited the opportune moment to fire at close range. Brown's dive brought him almost directly over von Richthofen. Brown was in a favourable position to give one burst, and he did so. In those fleeting moments he saw von Richthofen turn round the moment he fired. The Fokker continued on over Allied territory being subjected to ground fire from Australian and British troops. Then it wobbled and nosed into the ground. The aircraft lay in the field for several hours subjected to artillery fire until some Australian soldiers got a rope onto the body and pulled it across a road to safety.

When Brown later filled in his report there was no doubt in his mind that he had shot the DR1 down, and from the wording of his combat report and the evidence of the crashed triplane, he was rightly credited with the victory.

Richthofen had neglected his cardinal rule of air-fighting: don't go over the British lines, don't fly low and don't fly alone. He broke all three that morning, and it was his undoing.

A message to British HQ read:

Fokker triplane No 2009 brought down at sheet 62 D J19 B44 designated G/5B/2. Engine Le Rhone is marked model Oberursel No. 2478. Two Spandaus (nos 1795, 659) - (less locks & ammo. Prop; instruments and name plate on engine had also been taken before salvage.) Brown flew Camel No. 7270. Triplane a complete wreck and was exposed to shell-fire for some hours It is painted bright red all over. Date on top plane -- 13-12-17. Fabric of rather better quality than usual. Finish of engine is better than those captured in previous machines of this type.

Signed report of 3 Sqn., A.F.C. Eqpt. Officer, is present (N.J. Warenford). He arrived at site at 2 p.m. when machine was being shelled by H.E., body still in wreckage rope was fastened around body, drew it across road and down a trench and brought it to aerodrome. The machine was knocked about by shell splinters. Pilots seat forwarded to 209 Sqn for retention as a souvenir. Request for engine for Brown; but apparently not granted, as engine, guns, &c. were sent to England 26.5.18 (204/5/1465).

Von Richthofen's body was carried off by an Australian ambulance to Poulainville and placed in a hanger, where it was officially given a medical examination by Military doctors.

The Australians gave von Richthofen a full military funeral with an honour guard near the village of Bertangles. After the war he was exhumed by the Germans and buried at Fricourt, and was again exhumed and reburied with honours in Berlin.

A week later Brown wrote home to let his folks know what had happened:

R.N.A.S.

Passed by Censor No. 228 (Postmark:)

Army Post Office 27 Ap 18

Carleton Place, Ont. Mar. '18

(Envelope address:) Mr. J.M. Brown, Carleton Place, Ontario, Canada (Text of letter:
) 209 Squadron, R.A.F. c/p G.R.O. London, B.E.F. April 27, 18.

Show this letter to nobody but at home, Uncle Clarence's and Uncle Alex's please,

Dear Dad,-

I am afraid I have not written for some time but it has not been my fault. We have been working so hard it has been impossible. I feel just about all done in today the way things have gone. My stomach has been very bad recently and the doctor says if I keep on I shall have a nervous break-down and has ordered me to stop active service flying. I am to have two weeks leave and then go up for a medical examination again. I have done everything in my power to come back to France after that but it does not look very hopeful. Both my C.O. and I have seen the Colonel about it and the Colonel in interviewing the General but they all say I have to abide by the doctor's order. I am sorry that it should happen at the present time when there is so much work to do. I have just got the flight going beautifully now and I have all good chaps with me. What is more we have been doing very good work. I have been congratulated by two Generals for what I have done which is very pleasant.

Our best effort was on the 21st when we fought Baron von Richtofen's "Circus" as they are called. I expect you will have read about them in the papers. There were eleven of us and twenty-two of them as nearly as we can make out. It was the most terrible fight I have ever seen in the air. I doubt whether there ever has been one like it before. We shot down three of their triplanes which were seen to crash and one that has not been confirmed as yet. Among them was the Baron whom I shot down on our side of the lines.

We did not lose anyone in that flight. It is going to have great effect on the war in the air as that fight was ordered by the Hun to give him a chance to do reconnaissance in the air and of course he was defeated. It is bound to have a great effect on the Hun especially when they lost their best fighter and their stunt squadron was defeated.

That is one of the things we have done lately so you can plainly see I do not want to quit as there is such a wonderful opportunity at the present time to do effective work. We have a wonderful bunch of fellows in the squadron and I do hate to leave. The doctor said he would give me leave to go to Canada but I refused as there is too much to do here at present. How it will all come out I do not know. I do not feel at all well at present but a couple weeks rest I am quite sure will fix me up alright again. The Colonel is to see the General this afternoon and then I shall go on leave. I shall write you as soon as I get on leave and let you know what has happened.

I received your letter dated Mar 25 and I was very sorry to hear mother is sick and I hope by this time she is quite better again. If she would only not work so hard but there is no use saying anything. I am very glad to hear that Bess is not coming over. Try to persuade her not to come over at all. I hope she does not. Two of us over here at once is quite enough.

It was rather funny about Richthofen being shot down. The infantry on the ground the anti-aircraft and an Australian squadron put in reports that they had shot him down. All reports differed. They had a medical examination on the body and it was found they were all wrong without the slightest doubt. It is a terrible thing when you think of it that they should examine a body to see who should have the credit of killing him. What I saw that day shook me up quite a lot as it was the first time I have seen a man whom I know I had killed. If you don't shoot them they will shoot you so it has to be done. Shall write again soon.

Love to all
Roy

The Controversy

It would be remiss not to address the other claims and more contemporary controversy in regards to who actually shot down von Richthofen.

Who really killed the Red Baron?

Many have claimed credit since that fateful day, April 21, 1918.

All have their detractors and supporters.

Principal claimants are:

Captain A Roy Brown

Gunner Robert Buie(Lewis Gun) Australian 53rd battery #3801

Gunner Sgt CB Popkin (Vickers gun) with the Australian 24th machine gun company.

And someone who cannot be discounted is an unknown soldier with a Lee-Enfield .303 who could have fired the fatal shot in the rain of bullets fired at Manfred Freiherr von Richthofen. He was not a 'Baron', by the way. His title of 'Freiherr' loosely translates as 'freeman'.

All of these men have been touched with the brush of history. Brown's part was as important as Richthofen's. Even Lt Wilfred May who was merely an unwitting lure for Richthofen had his part to play in this very real drama. What cannot be agreed upon and possibly never will, is the question of who supported the leading role. Who really killed the Red Baron? The answer to this is not as important as seeing all of them, including A. Roy Brown and Wilfred May, as the heroes they really were, involved in the day to day, month to month and year to year horror of the worst conflagration the world had ever seen.

After official enquires, and in the field medical examinations by both British and Australian Army medical personnel at the time, regardless of any opinions or controversy, Captain A. Roy Brown was and still is officially credited with the downing of Von Richthofen.

The End of the War

Nine days after Brown shot down Von Richthofen, he was admitted to hospital for his severe gastritis, as well as stress and exhaustion. At this time his friend Stearne Edwards also due to battle fatigue and was sent to 24 General Hospital. Stearne was sent on leave to England, and after his recovery was posted as an instructor at No 2 School of Aerial Fighting and Gunnery. Brown finally got out of hospital in mid-June and went on a well deserved leave with Stearne Edwards.

That July Roy was also appointed to No. 2 School of Aerial Fighting as an instructor with his life long friend Stearne Edwards. His luck ran out however, on the morning of July 5, 1918. Just after taking off on a routine flight his motor died. In front of him were trees and telegraph lines so he tried to turn back to the aerodrome. He didn't make it.

On seeing the crash, a horrified Stearne ran across the field to the hospital where he found two orderlies with what they assumed to be a dead pilot, and were headed to the mortuary. Stearne noticed the "corpse" was bleeding; the presence of blood pressure meant that Roy was still alive. The Medical Officer arrived, but after a short examination he decided Roy had only a few hours to live and that treating his injuries would gain nothing. Stearne Edwards did not accept that diagnosis, and in the belief, "where there is life there is hope", he intervened personally.

Margaret Hamilton, Roy's daughter, remembers her father giving the following description of what happened next;

"Stearne borrowed a motorcycle, and leaving me in the care of the nurses who were dealing with the shock, and external bleeding, he rode into town to find a doctor and bring him back to the aerodrome." (This was more easily said than done since by military regulations civilian doctors were not permitted to enter a military base to treat servicemen.) "Stearne found one, and made the following proposal to overcome his reluctance to break the law; "If you do not come with me right now to work on my colleague, I shall start work on you even sooner."

	No 2 Fighting School
	Marske Yorks.
	July 21
Dear Mr. Brown, Long before you get this it will be one thing or the other with Roy. I hope you will forgive me for not having cabled you immediately but I could not do it for up till two days ago they expected every minute to be his last and I could not bring	

myself to send you news of that sort. He was mostly kept under the influence of drugs, and even when conscious, could not understand anything said to him, so I could see no use in cabling you.

He was just getting off the ground on his second flight here. At about 200' his engine stopped and since there were trees and telegraph wires in front of him, he tried to turn back to the aerodrome. He lost his speed on the sharp turn and he fell from about 60' feet vertical to the ground. Luckily the ground was soft, but it was bad enough. The engine somehow was thrown on top of the wreckage, although it was a Camel he was flying and its weight was more or less on his head and neck. I saw it all from where I stood and thought he must be killed instantly. The red + hut was not 100' away and no time was lost. Both collar bones are broken, four ribs I think, one of which has pierced his lung. His jaw may or may not be broken. There is a cut or rather a hole in the inside upper corner of his eye which they thought at first had pierced the brain, but it had not and will probably not be serious. There is also a cut on his forehead and of course many smaller cuts and bruises on his face and body.

The station doctor gave up all hope for him immediately and I brought a specialist down who arrived that evening and said the same thing so you see things looked pretty blue. However he has gradually improved and it is the opinion of three doctors that he will now pull through. He is being well looked after and has three nurses for himself.

He was quite rational in his mind for a while yesterday but wandered quite a lot. The nurse told me he had gotten her to write you.

To-day he was better than ever and could talk quite well. He is in no pain at all except that he sometimes insists on moving his arm and then his shoulder hurts. He has been talking all day and keeps the nurses laughing so he is in good spirits.

As soon as he is fit, they will move him to a hospital.

Well it has been a very anxious week but I think the worst is over now, though of course he has a long way yet to go. Anyway, here's hoping for the best.

Goodbye

Stearns Edwards

Roy was awarded a bar to his Distinguished Service Cross, his second DSC, for his work since his first DSC. BROWN, Flight Lieutenant Arthur Roy - Bar to Distinguished Service Cross - awarded as per London Gazette dated 21 June 1918.

“For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. On the 21st April, 1918, while leading a patrol of six scouts he attacked a formation of twenty hostile scouts. He personally

engaged two Fokker triplanes, which he drove off; then, seeing that one of our machines was being attacked and apparently hard pressed, he dived on the hostile scout, firing the while. This scout, a Fokker triplane, nose dived and crashed to the ground. Since the award of the Distinguished Service Cross he has destroyed several other enemy aircraft and has shown great dash and enterprise in attacking enemy troops from low altitudes despite heavy anti-aircraft fire.”

Roy and Stearne Edwards, who had also been awarded a bar to his DSC, were to have received them from the Prince of Wales at a ceremony in London, however due to his crash Roy had not recovered sufficiently enough to attend. Roy would later receive the award during a ceremony at the Parliament Buildings in Toronto from H.R.H. the Prince of Wales on November 4th, 1919, during his visit to Canada.

November 11, 1918, the "war to end all wars" finally ended.

November 12, 1918 Stearne Edwards crashed in a flying accident in a Sopwith Pup. He died on the 22nd. As a result of his injuries. It must have been a hard blow for Roy Brown as they were best friends who had both grown up in the same town and survived to the end of the Great War. In 1920 a memorial service was held for Edwards in the Presbyterian Church in Carleton Place and a tablet unveiled by Roy Brown. The tablet reads:

IN PROUD AND LOVING MEMORY OF CAPTAIN STEARNE TIGHE EDWARDS,
DSC ROYAL AIR FORCE WHO DIED OF INJURIES RECEIVED ON ARMISTICE
DAY, WHILE IN THE SERVICE OF HIS COUNTRY FAITHFUL EVEN UNTO
DEATH

He also suffered yet another very personal and tragic loss, which must have greatly affected him as well. In February 1919 Roy's younger brother John Horace Brown while also serving as a pilot in the RAF died in a London hospital of influenza at the age of 22 with Roy at his side. In a letter from Doug Findlay, another Carleton Place WWI pilot to Roy's other brother, Howard Morton Brown, dated 18 June 1969 he writes: *Roy and I went to see him at a London hospital and the nurse kept me out but admitted Roy. In a few minutes Roy came out and said "Horry's just died: the last word I heard him say was your name."*

A. Roy Browns Date of Discharge was August 1st, 1919. Shortly after this Roy Brown was de-mobilized and returned home to Carleton Place.

Comments made by Roy's youngest brother Howard Morton Brown on the changes in Roy are very in-sight full as to the effect the war had on him: "Personality before the war – sociable, lively, popular, athletic, markedly extrovert." "Different personality after the war – Had some war caused heath stresses (headaches, pains from injuries, etc.), became more serious, less fun loving, very dedicated to money making business interests, had many friends and associates, very self-confident."

Life After The War

When the war was over Brown gratefully retired from the RAF and went back to civilian.

As part of Roy's ongoing recover from his service injuries, he was administered massage treatments. He became quite friendly with the volunteer nurse who administered the treatments. She was Edythe Lois Monypenny, the daughter of Thomas Flavelle Monypenny, the Chairman of the National Military Committee of the YMCA, and one of the owners of the Imperial Varnish and Color Company in Toronto. It was not long before Roy and Eydthe began going out together.

Roy Brown married Edythe Lois Monypenny in Toronto. Feb., 19th, 1920. They had two Daughters, Margaret and Barbara, and a son, Donald. Roy was very proud of his daughter who both served in the Women's Air Corp during WWII.

His first civilian job was as secretary of the board and chief accountant of the Imperial Varnish and Color Company of Toronto and later Sales Manager for the company, eventually becoming a director of the company. He retired from this company in 1934 to devote his time to his airline company.

In 1928 Roy Brown started a small airline in Quebec and Ontario. General Airways Ltd. operated out of Amos, Quebec. The company was a pioneer in servicing remote mining companies and communities in Northern Quebec and Ontario both summer and winter. His company expanded over the years and was quite successful but, when the Canadian government decided to get into the airline business Roy being a good businessman saw the writing on the wall, so he sold his company to them.

He took a job as Advisory Editor to Canadian Aviation magazine, but had to give it up on the advice of his doctor. He needed fresh air to breathe or would not last another year. He purchased a run-down farm near Stouffville, Ontario and turned it into a prosperous business. The farm was named Lisnaclin. In 1945 after his death one of his Holstein cows set a world record for buttermilk production. The Farm is now a golf course, but the farm house still exists.

He also worked with the Stinson Aircraft Company of Detroit, and had a great deal of influence in the design and production of a number of their very successful bush planes.

When WWII started to his credit he came to Ottawa and tried to join the RCAF but was rejected, probably due to his injuries and health incurred from his service in WW1.

In 1943, he ran for a seat in the Ontario legislature for the Liberal Party in the riding Toronto-Woodbine, but lost in a landslide against the government of the day. During the campaign he stated: *"The postwar period is more serious than winning the war. We who served in the last war know what it is to get kicked out of the service and then wonder*

where to turn and where to go to make a living. I got back into civilian life last time with 27 fractures and was a nervous wreck. I got no pension. That kind of thing must never happen again."

Nearly his last public act was a photo op with the current WWII ace of the day, George Beurling.

Captain Arthur Roy Brown died of a heart attack at age 50, in Stouffville, Ontario, March, 9th, 1944.

Brown was buried at the Aurora town cemetery, near Toronto. Some 10 years after his death his widow had his remains disinterred and cremated at Toronto, as per Roy's original wishes. His remains were then interred on November 30, 1954 at the Toronto Necropolis, Adult Common Ground, at the corner of Winchester and Sumach Streets in plot A-6. His wife Edythe passed away on November 9th, 1988 at the age of 92 and her remains are at the same location in plot A-164.

Roy Brown certainly never bragged about his achievements nor paid a lot of attention to how many aircraft he had shot down. He was, however, keen on getting to grips with the enemy. He was confident of his abilities, and of his men. He led them well, never losing a man in his flight. which was an exceptional record during WW1. Even when he was nearly crippled with gastritis, battle fatigue and exhaustion he led them against the enemy for he knew that the men on the ground needed aerial protection to succeed. He undoubtedly shortened his life with his knowing determination to succeed as a fighter pilot and leader, and that is what makes heroes.