

# The Royal Aeronautical Society

(FOUNDED 1846)

with which is incorporated The Institution of Aeronautical Engineers

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## R 101

His Majesty's rigid airship R 101 left Cardington on Saturday, October 4th, at 7.35 p.m. Shortly after 2 a.m. on Sunday morning, October 5th, the airship crashed near Beauvais, catching fire, with a resulting loss of forty-eight lives. A list of those who perished appears on page 896, and biographical notices of those who were members of the Society on page 897.

“And now they have died together, and with them has gone a great treasure of gathered knowledge and invaluable experience.”

# R 101

The following are the names of those who lost their lives in the R 101 disaster. The members of the Society who perished are commemorated elsewhere in this issue of the Journal:—

## PASSENGERS.

- Brig.-General the Right Hon. Lord Thomson, P.C., C.B.E., D.S.O.,**  
Secretary of State for Air.
- Air Vice-Marshal Sir W. Sefton Brancker, K.C.B., A.F.C.,** Director  
of Civil Aviation.
- Wing-Commander R. B. B. Colmore, O.B.E., R.A.F.,** Director of  
Airship Development.
- Lieut.-Colonel V. C. Richmond,** Assistant Director of Airship Develop-  
ment (Tech.).
- Major G. H. Scott, C.B.E., A.F.C.,** Assistant Director of Airship  
Development (Flying).
- Major P. Bishop, O.B.E.,** Chief Inspector, Aeronautical Inspection  
Department, Air Ministry.
- Squadron Leader F. M. Rope** (attached to Directorate of Airship  
Development).
- Mr. A. Bushfield,** Aeronautical Inspection Department.
- Squadron Leader W. H. L. O'Neill, M.C., R.A.F.,** representing the  
Secretary of State for India.
- Squadron Leader W. Palstra, M.C.,** representing the Royal Australian  
Air Force.
- Mr. J. Buck,** in attendance on the Secretary of State for Air.

## OFFICERS.

- Flight-Lieut. H. C. Irwin, A.F.C., R.A.F.,** Captain.
- Squadron Leader E. L. Johnston, O.B.E., A.F.C., R.A.F.,** Navigator.
- Lieut.-Comdr. N. G. Atherstone, A.F.C., (R.N. Ret.),** 1st Officer.
- Flying Officer M. H. Steff, R.A.F.,** 2nd Officer.
- Mr. M. A. Giblett, M.Sc.,** Superintendent of Airship Division,  
Meteorological Office, Meteorological Officer.

## CREW.

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| <b>G. K. Atkin,</b> wireless operator.           | <b>M. F. Littlekit,</b> engineer.                 |
| <b>R. Blake,</b> engineer.                       | <b>C. H. Mason,</b> assistant coxswain.           |
| <b>C. A. Burton,</b> engineer.                   | <b>J. W. Megginson,</b> galley boy.               |
| <b>S. Church,</b> rigger.                        | <b>W. Moule,</b> engineer.                        |
| <b>C. J. Ferguson,</b> engineer.                 | <b>A. W. J. Norcott,</b> rigger.                  |
| <b>H. E. Ford,</b> rigger.                       | <b>L. F. Oughton,</b> assistant cox-<br>swain.    |
| <b>P. A. Foster,</b> rigger.                     | <b>W. A. Potter,</b> assistant chief<br>coxswain. |
| <b>W. R. Gent, A.F.M.,</b> first engi-<br>neer.  | <b>W. G. Radcliffe,</b> rigger.                   |
| <b>E. A. Graham,</b> cook.                       | <b>M. G. Rampton,</b> rigger.                     |
| <b>A. C. Hastings,</b> engineer.                 | <b>A. J. Richardson,</b> rigger.                  |
| <b>F. Hodnett,</b> assistant steward.            | <b>E. G. Rudd,</b> rigger.                        |
| <b>G. W. Hunt, A.F.M.,</b> chief<br>coxswain.    | <b>A. H. Savidge,</b> chief steward.              |
| <b>S. T. Keeley,</b> chief wireless<br>operator. | <b>S. E. Scott,</b> charge-hand engi-<br>neer.    |
| <b>T. A. A. Key,</b> charge-hand engi-<br>neer.  | <b>G. W. Short,</b> charge-hand engi-<br>neer.    |
| <b>W. H. King,</b> engineer.                     | <b>C. E. Taylor,</b> rigger.                      |
| <b>F. Elliott,</b> wireless operator.            | <b>A. H. Watkins,</b> engineer.                   |

*Per Ardua ad Astra.*

**LORD THOMSON OF CARDINGTON, P.C., C.B.E., D.S.O.**  
**SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AIR, *Companion***

Lord Thomson of Cardington was the third son of Major-General David Thomson, R.E., and was born on April 13th, 1875. Educated at Cheltenham, he passed into Woolwich and was gazetted to the Royal Engineers in March, 1894. He saw active service in Mashonaland in 1896, and again in 1899 during the South African War. He was one of the officers engaged in the relief of Kimberley. In 1902 he became Assistant Instructor at the Engineering School at Chatham and entered the Staff College in January, 1909. In 1912 Thomson was sent to the Serbian Army and remained with them throughout the campaign against the Turks and the war with Bulgaria. In August, 1914, he sailed for France with Sir Henry Wilson. For a while he served as a liaison officer, followed by some weeks at Belgian Headquarters and afterwards with the Staff of the 1st Corps of the B.E.F. In February, 1915, he became the first Military Attaché at Bucharest, and then head of the British Mission after Rumania entered the war. In 1917, on his return to England, after superintending the destruction of the Rumanian oil wells, he went to Palestine as C.R.E. of the 60th Division. In 1918 he went to France on the Supreme War Council, and remained at Versailles until 1919.

In that year, with the rank of Brigadier-General, he retired from the Army and joined the Labour Party, and in January, 1924, he became the first Labour Air Minister, and was created Lord Thomson of Cardington.

Brief though the period was that Lord Thomson was first in office he left his mark on aviation, and the air world saw in him a Minister who took far more than an academic interest in his post. During his few months of office in 1924 the Air Estimates were considerably increased, airship development, which was at a standstill, was begun afresh, and the plans for R.100 and R.101 were prepared. He travelled regularly by air on visits of inspection, until the fall of the Government in the autumn of 1924. On the return of the Labour Party to power, in 1929, Lord Thomson again became Air Minister, and saw the plans he had prepared in 1924 come to fruition during his second period of office.

Lord Thomson, in his farewell message to the staff of the Air Ministry in 1924, stated his belief in the unlimited potentialities of aviation both in peace and war. He was insistent that the air is the first line of defence, and he consistently fought for the development of the Royal Air Force. And perhaps the side in which he was most interested, and for which he gave his life, was the development of the airship.

Lord Thomson joined the Society in 1927 and took an active interest in its work. It was characteristic of him that the day before his death he sent a message to the retiring President, Colonel the Master of Sempill, on relinquishing his office, and one to the new President, Mr. Fairey, on taking over his new duties.

**AIR VICE-MARSHAL SIR WILLIAM SEFTON BRANCKER, K.C.B., A.F.C.**  
**DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION, *Fellow***

Air Vice-Marshal Sir William Sefton Brancker was born on March 27th, 1877, and was the eldest son of the late Colonel W. G. Brancker, C.B., R.A. Educated at Bedford he passed into Woolwich and was commissioned in the Royal Artillery in 1896. He served in the South African War, was wounded and mentioned in dispatches. From 1903-1912 he served in India in artillery and other staff appointments. It was during this period, in 1910, he made his first flight, as a military observer, in a 50 h.p. Bristol box-kite. From that moment the air held him as nothing else. He learnt to fly on a Vickers biplane,