

came over to Europe as airship pilots during the war, being stationed at Paimbœuf Air Station in France, and held the French airship pilot's brevet, No. 97. He was awarded the U.S. Navy Cross for his services. Lieutenant Little joined the Society as a Foreign Member on October 19th, 1920.

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**LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR DAVID HENDERSON, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.,  
D.S.O., Hon.F.R.Aë.S.**

"David" has gone, and the world of aviation laments the departure of one of its most interesting and greatest figures.

David Henderson started life as an engineer, but opportunity offered and he transferred his activities to the more honourable and less lucrative profession of arms. His career as a soldier was conspicuously successful, and when aviation first appeared on the military horizon, he had a long and distinguished record of active service to his credit. His greatest successes had been won in the Intelligence Branch of the General Staff—and it was this experience which qualified him particularly to grasp the vast possibilities of aircraft as a means of reconnaissance when his military and naval contemporaries were both sceptical and inert in their attitude towards this new weapon of war.

In 1912 he stepped into the aeronautical world by "taking his ticket" at Brooklands at the age of 50, to the furtive annoyance of some of his equals and to the amazement and admiration of his juniors; at the time he must have been the oldest man in the world who had attained this qualification. General Henderson was then Director of Military Training in the War Office, and it was probably the fact that he was the only senior officer in the Army who could fly, which led to military aviation being placed under a branch of his particular directorate.

From that moment his whole life was devoted to the new cause. No one who did not actually work under him can realise the vast amount of time and energy he gave to aviation during 1912 and 1913. The onerous duties of Director of the Training of the Army already more than fully occupied his time, but he spent untold hours both by day and night in tackling the endless and difficult questions which arose during the birth and development of the Royal Flying Corps and the Military Aeronautics Directorate. His foresight and judgment at this time were remarkable; if the archives of the War Office dealing with aviation at this period are ever seriously studied, they will be a revelation of his sound judgment combined with imagination and enthusiasm. Every step taken was considered fully and thoroughly, and the fruits of almost every decision of importance have endured to the present day through all the changes of control and of headquarter organisation which have occurred since. To him must be given the credit of the first conception of a flying service common to both Army and Navy, divided into Military and Naval Wings and controlled by an Air Committee, consisting of the leading officials in the Government and in the two great warlike departments concerned with aviation. This Committee had operated with great success for two years when the war started; if it could only have been continued with increased powers, much useless and pernicious overlapping and competition between the Admiralty and War Office could have been avoided. But David Henderson and some of the other members went off to the war, and the Committee was allowed to lapse, until the two Air Boards and eventually the Air Ministry restored the policy of central control over all matters concerned with aviation. For the first year of the war General Henderson commanded the Royal Flying Corps in the field with conspicuous distinction; Lord French, the Commander-in-Chief, was lavish in his praise of the good work he did, and it was under him that the Royal Flying Corps created a reputation for dash, courage, good discipline and reliability in battle, which was maintained in face of all difficulties until the last day of the war.

In the middle of 1915 David Henderson returned to the War Office and again took up the duties of Director-General of Military Aeronautics and Aviation Member of the Army Council, the post which he held before the war, and continued in this capacity until the autumn of 1917. During this period the Military Aeronautics Directorate and the Royal Flying Corps grew both in size and in accomplishment far beyond the dreams of the saner enthusiasts at the beginning of the great struggle. His counsels on the first Air Board under Lord Curzon in 1916 and the second Air Board under Lord Cowdray in 1917 were of infinite value, and were a potent factor in the steady development towards the creation of the Royal Air Force under an independent Air Ministry. By the frankness of his statements and his almost furious opposition to the machinations of self-seekers and self-advertisers, he earned for himself a not inconsiderable group of enemies and detractors, by whose instigation various criticisms were levelled at him in Parliament, in the Press and in private. They carried no weight, however, with those who really knew him, and in the Pemberton-Billing inquiry, held by the Government in 1916, he absolutely vindicated his policy on every debatable point, and established a reputation for clear-mindedness and ability in legal debate such as has seldom been attained before by a simple soldier.

In the autumn of 1917 it was decided to create an independent Air Ministry, and General Henderson was relieved of his appointment as D.G.M.A. and Member of the Army Council to collaborate with General Smuts and advise the War Cabinet as to the best lines of development and organisation.

In January, 1918, the Air Ministry came into being, and General Henderson was appointed a member of the Air Council.

Then came perhaps the worst moment in the whole history of the development of the flying services of this country. Lord Rothermere had been appointed as the first Air Minister; his inexperience in the workings of a Government Department and the difficulties of control of an entirely new and far from homogeneous service, led to serious differences of opinion between him and the Chief of the Air Staff, General Trenchard. The latter thought it his duty to resign, but this fact was not disclosed until a month afterwards, in March, 1918, when Lord Rothermere announced the fact and nominated his successor without consulting the Members of the Air Council.

General Henderson rose in righteous indignation and objected vehemently to the course adopted by the Air Minister and to his selection, and finally resigned as a protest against the policy pursued.

Very soon afterwards Lord Rothermere was forced to resign himself, owing to the difficulties of the situation he had created, but unfortunately David Henderson had gone, and never again took any active participation in the control of the Royal Air Force.

His departure was a great and irreparable loss to the young service, and the rectitude of his action during the crisis has been fully vindicated by subsequent events.

In the summer of 1918 he suffered a cruel blow from the death of his gallant son Ian, in an aeroplane accident in Scotland.

After his resignation from the Air Council, General Henderson served with distinction under the War Office for the few remaining months of the war, and then took over the control of the International Red Cross organisation at Geneva. But a reserved and highly sensitive temperament had been severely taxed by unremitting hard work in the service of his country for many years, and the resulting wear and tear, combined with the effects of his son's tragic death, must have undermined his health and cut short his career of usefulness and good service to the British Empire and to humanity at large.

David Henderson was a natural soldier, a great gentleman and a good Scotsman; a fighting enemy and an unflinching friend. He combined great ambition with devotion to duty, and fierce courage with gentleness and an exceeding kind heart. His fine spirit was remarkable, even amongst the most gallant of the old

Army; a quality which unfortunately gave him the power to undermine his health by overwork in the cause of aviation.

He was a delightful companion and a gifted raconteur. His subtle wit and imperturbable charm of manner captivated all those who came into contact with him, and his friends and admirers were legion. His scientific and engineering knowledge was remarkable for a soldier, and the Committee of Aeronautical Research owe much to his advice in the early days. He had great artistic talent and was a devoted lover of music.

Although he was a great soldier, he might well have been an even greater diplomat if Fate had led his steps into that walk of life; he was cautious in council and slow in deliberation, always manœuvring round a difficulty if it were humanly possible; but once it was clear that further consideration was useless, his action was swift, decisive and far-reaching.

Let us mourn seriously and sincerely for David Henderson; the rising generation does not promise to produce more men of his stamp and quality for the service of aviation. He has left us, but his works will live and grow and multiply; and the Air Force of the future should look back to him as their real Creator and their first Chief.

He had been an Associate Fellow of the Society since 1912, and was elected Honorary Fellow on December 14th, 1917.

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### SQUADRON LEADER G. H. NORMAN.

The progress of experimental aeronautics has suffered a serious loss by the death of Squadron Leader G. H. Norman, the head of the Engine Research Department of the Royal Aircraft Establishment, who died on 18th August, at the Cambridge Hospital, Aldershot. Squadron Leader Norman had been intended for the Royal Navy and educated at the Royal Naval Academy, Gosport, but afterwards studied at the Royal School of Mines and obtained an associateship. He was also an associate member of the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and a B.Sc. (Eng.), London. In the early days of the war he served in the Artillery, but was transferred to the R.F.C., where he soon qualified as pilot, and spent thirteen months on the Western Front as Flying Officer and Flight Commander. It was whilst fighting in France that he conceived, made and used what became the standard aerial gun-sight for both the British and American forces.

This sight, which bears his name, was adopted without serious rival during the rest of war, its principal merit being provision of the absolute necessary allowances for the speed of contending aircraft, with the minimum of complications, being thus in marked contrast to other types of sight under trial at the time, most of these being far too complicated for general use in air fighting. After being wounded in action and twice mentioned in despatches, Squadron Leader G. H. Norman was posted to the Armament Station at Orfordness by the late Major Hopkinson, who, impressed by his great constructive ability and enthusiasm for work, placed him in charge of flying at the Experimental Station. From that time to the day of his last short illness his vigorous prosecution of every kind of experimental work was unceasing.

Though officially concerned only with flying at Orfordness, his advice was asked and generally taken in questions connected with almost every branch of the work of the station, and the influence of his clear thinking and great designing ability remains in many schemes and productions with which his name has been in no way connected, for his interest always lay in the work itself. He was by no means a typical inventor in the sense in which the word is popularly understood, that is to say, a man who works by brain waves without labour, his produc-