



Australia's Third Air Mail

The aviation career of
Graham Carey.... and some other
interesting airmen

Other booklets by Tom Lockley

Aviation:

Maurice Guillaux: Pioneer French Airman in Australia

Maurice Guillaux:

Pionnier français de l'aviation australienne

(translated by M Berti, French Consul in Australia)

Australia's First Seaplane:

(Guillaux and Lebbeus Hordern's seaplane, 1914)

100 Years of Australian Air Mails

(record of the 2014 centenary re-enactment flight)

Australia's Second Air Mail

The aviation Career of Basil Watson, 1893-1917

The Powerhouse Museum, Sydney

Heritage Aspects of the Powerhouse Museum Precinct

(May 2016)

Heritage Aspects of the Powerhouse Museum

(August 2016)

(Sydney's Powerhouse Museum is in danger of
being destroyed to permit 'urban renewal')

Email: tomlockley@gmail.com

A note on sources

In a booklet of this size, it is not possible to give full references. If you would like to know the source of any statement, or have any corrections to make, please email me at tomlockley@gmail.com.

For Carey, the predominant source is of course his biography, *A Message from the Clouds*, by Des Martin and Bertha Carey, as mentioned in the preface of this booklet.

Marduel's story is harder to assemble, and basically his service records and the mighty *Trove* are the main sources. I relied mainly on *A Message from the Clouds* for information on Prosser, then happened to find the magazine *Automobile* for October 2016, which provided fascinating information on his car-making venture. For Treloar, there is a marvellous collection of documents and photos on the website of the National Museum of Australia. Other information came from various historical treatments of the 'Half Flight' and, again, from *Trove*.

Throughout, Keith Meggs' magnificent work *Australian Aircraft and their Industry* has been indispensable, and I thank the library staff of the Powerhouse Museum for their wonderful support and tolerance.

Nelson Eustis' little booklets, and his catalogue of airmail stamps have provided useful information. Indeed, the format of my little series of books is influenced by his booklet *Fifty Years of Air Mails*. He wrote similar booklets on Basil Watson and Graham Carey, and copies may be found on the shelves at the Mitchell Library, Sydney University.

The next significant airmail centenary is that of Captain Harry Butler (not to be confused with C A Butler) who on 6 August 1919 flew mail from Adelaide to Minlaton, the first over-water airmail flight in Australia. I hope it will also be commemorated.

Tom Lockley, November 2017

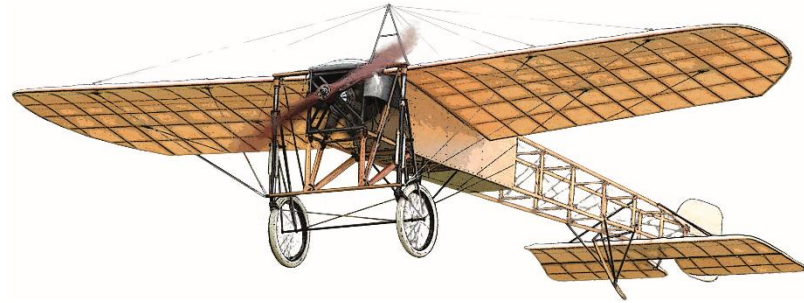
Australia's Third Air Mail

Graham Carey, 1874-1958 and some aviation associates

Tom Lockley



Robert Graham Carey c1899



Hanging from the ceiling of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo, Sydney, is the Blériot monoplane imported to Australia by Maurice Guillaux in 1914. With this aircraft Guillaux conducted many air displays and created a sensation with his daring aerobatics, for which the machine had been specially made.

In July 1914 he flew Australia's first 'official' air mail flight, a one-off journey from Melbourne to Sydney, taking over two days in the process. There was a major re-enactment in 2014, described in the booklet *100 Years of Australian Air Mails..*

The second such exercise was performed by airman Basil Watson, and his story is told *Australia's Second Air Mail*.

W Graham Carey purchased Guillaux' aircraft and on 23 November 1917 a third airmail demonstration flight occurred, from Adelaide to nearby Gawler. The production of this booklet marks the centenary of the airmail flight, being commemorated by a re-enactment on 23 November 2017 (see pages 9 and 10).

But Graham Carey was a remarkable person whose story deserves to be more widely known. I recommend the book *A Message from the Clouds*, by Des Martin and Bertha Carey, published in 2004, and still readily available. For this brief treatment of Graham Carey I have plundered many remarkable insights and unique pictures, with the generous permission of the editor, Edith Martin. Direct quotes from this book are in inverted commas with no other acknowledgement.

The opportunity is taken to discuss other pioneer airmen who were associated with Carey – Jean Claude Marduel, William Harold Treloar and Edwin Prosser. Their names often appear in the story of early aviation in Australia.

Tom Lockley.

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He was released in November 1918 and quickly returned home. He was, relatively briefly, employed at Point Cook, where, as is described on page 14, he seems to have been responsible for the preparation of the Farmans sold to Graham Carey.

Treloar took part in an aerial tour of Victoria publicizing a 'Peace Loan'. He won an 'aerial derby' from Bendigo to Melbourne on August 27, 1919. The *Age* reported on 29 October 1919 that the aircraft had carried 400 passengers in its recent tour, covering over 3000 miles, thus 'making a record for Australian aviation' and demonstrating the perfect stability of modern aeroplanes and their safety as passenger carriers'.



In May 1920 he purchased his own DH-6 from those offered for sale (see page 14). Like Carey's aircraft, it became a flying advertising billboard and for the next few years he flew around the state giving flying displays and joy flights.

He was later employed as an aviation officer for the British Imperial Oil Company Ltd in Adelaide, a subsidiary of the Shell Transport and Trading Company (becoming the Shell Company of Australia Ltd in 1927), from 1920 to 1940.

Incidentally, he was not 'the founder of the Australian War Memorial' as has been stated: that person was actually Lieutenant-Colonel John Winton Treloar.

Harold Treloar

William Harold Treloar, usually known as Harold, was born in 1889. At the time his father was engaged in various rural pursuits – station management, stock and station agent and later simply ‘commercial traveller’. Harold himself was very involved in the auto industry before travelling to England in 1914 to learn to fly.

His progress was followed in newspapers as he gained Royal Aero Club licence no 855 on 9 July and went on to do advanced flying at the Bleriot School. He returned to Australia shortly thereafter, and when the first overseas contingent of airmen was sent to war, forming the famous ‘Mesopotamia Half Flight’ he was an obvious choice., being one of the most highly trained of the seven trained pilots in the total Australian Flying Corps. The task of the ‘half flight’ was to provide air support for the Indian army in Mesopotamia (Iraq).

Mechanics and other tradesmen were collected, most of whom had no aircraft experience, and the group reached Basra on My 26, 1915, where they were joined by two British airmen and a New Zealander. Two Maurice Farman Shorthorns and one very worn Longhorn were the available aircraft. Despite woeful support facilities, the group managed to operate on May 31.

The aircraft were mainly useful for reconnaissance, itself a difficult task in aircraft that could barely fly at 60 miles an hour in still air. Improvised bombing apparatus was made, two-pound bombs being dropped through holes in the floor of the aircraft. On July 21 two Caudron biplanes arrived, slightly more useful than the Farmans, and it was while flying one of these on September 16 that Treloar force-landed behind enemy lines as a result of engine failure. He and his observer were captured by Arab tribesmen and ‘treated badly’ until they were handed over to the Turks. At times it seems that captives were treated quite well, but in 1917 his group of prisoners was imprisoned in terrible conditions as reprisal for alleged British atrocities, and companions died of disease.

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Carey (aged 51) and children Bertha and Howard, August 1926

Introducing Graham Carey

Robert Graham Carey was born at Warnambool, Victoria, in 1874, but his family moved to Melbourne in 1879. His father, Robert, tried his luck as a gold miner before settling as a coach driver for Cobb and Co.

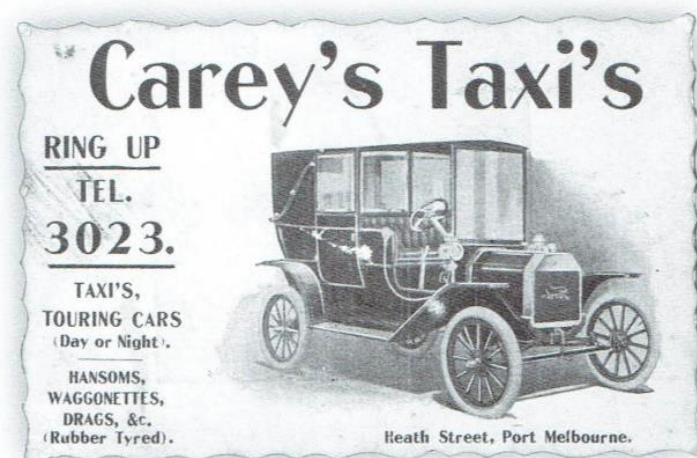
Robert senior worked for other people but, at the age of 20, his son began a transport business and a hay and corn store, which prospered. He married Edith Gilchrist, who worked for a Melbourne printing firm, in 1899. As well as providing the family with six offspring, she was an active participant in his ventures. She suggested that he change his signature to the more imposing R Graham Carey and he was generally known as Graham.

By 1907, when Carey was 33, Carey's Port Melbourne Livery Stables, (phone 3023), was offering to convey patrons in everything from rubber-tyred hansom cabs to luxurious wedding coaches with a crew of liveried attendants. A year later, Carey's Taxis were offering 'handsome 20 hp touring cars (model T Fords) on call 24 hours a day'. In April 1912 his enterprise became a public company with a capital of £50,000. In 1924 it merged its operations with other firms, retaining only freehold properties, and survived until 1934.

He himself had a reputation for elegance, and was 'partial to wearing a silk scarf when dressed in his best'; he did not smoke, drink or swear, and was always socially and politically active.

In 1912 he moved to Ballarat, and established a motor garage selling Ford cars.

In 1913 he drove one of these cars in the Reliability Trial run from



By 1926 he had obviously come back to Australia, as he purchased the famous Blériot from Carey on February 24. Prosser was living at Wentworth, a rather remote town in the far south-west of New South Wales. The Blériot crashed at Tamworth on March 9, 1926, and was repossessed by Carey and sold to K J Chaffey, eventually ending up as a museum exhibit as described earlier, page 11.

In the *Capricornian* of 16 October 1926 Prosser was reported as building an aircraft at Rockhampton. The newspaper spoke glowingly of its remarkable features and Prosser's brilliant early career as pilot, but Keith Meggs' wonderful book describes the way the aircraft was being built without plans and had very questionable aerodynamics. The Civil Aviation Bureau inspector urged Prosser not to continue. The aircraft never flew.

He appears to have had some sort of mental breakdown, 'coming to the attention of police' in Murwillumbah on 31 August 1928, and being remanded for medical examination.

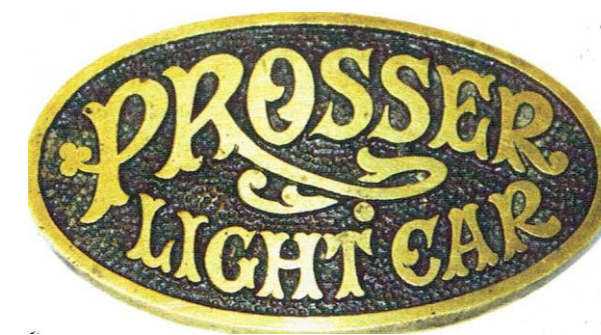
On 19 October 1929, in company of Alfred Prosser, (probably a brother who had come from Wales to bring him back), he returned to England on the steamship *Hobsons Bay*. Nothing more is known of

him until he died on 16 June 1966 in an expensive private hospital.

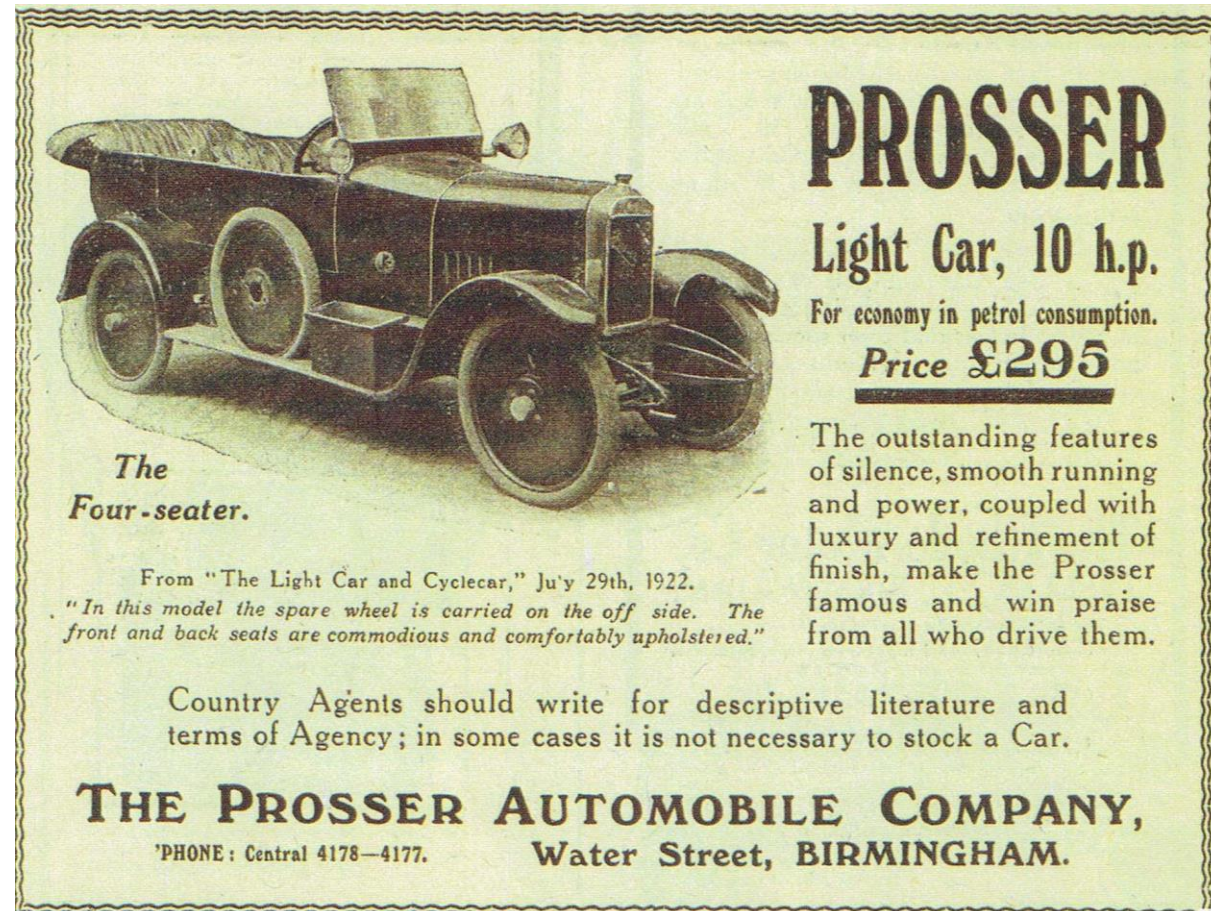
There are many examples of early aviation manufacturers who also were involved with automobiles.

For example, Farman and Voisin

cars were made in France, and Blériot himself produced a successful cyclecar. Germany had Rumpler and Italy had Landini. In the US, there was Curtiss, and later, Ford. In the UK, C S Rolls, Graham-White, Alliot Verdon-Roe and Short Brothers were successful in both fields. But Edwin Prosser was not to join this illustrious group. The car badge above is the only remaining part of any Prosser car, and is a forlorn reminder of this interesting character.



its class. However, small manufacturers such as Prosser could not compete with the huge firms like Morris, whose Morris Cowley was of higher specification, and because of economies achieved with higher production, of lower cost. The company ceased production some time in 1922.



PROSSER
Light Car, 10 h.p.
 For economy in petrol consumption.
Price £295

The outstanding features of silence, smooth running and power, coupled with luxury and refinement of finish, make the Prosser famous and win praise from all who drive them.

The Four-seater.

From "The Light Car and Cyclecar," Ju'y 29th, 1922.
"In this model the spare wheel is carried on the off side. The front and back seats are commodious and comfortably upholstered."

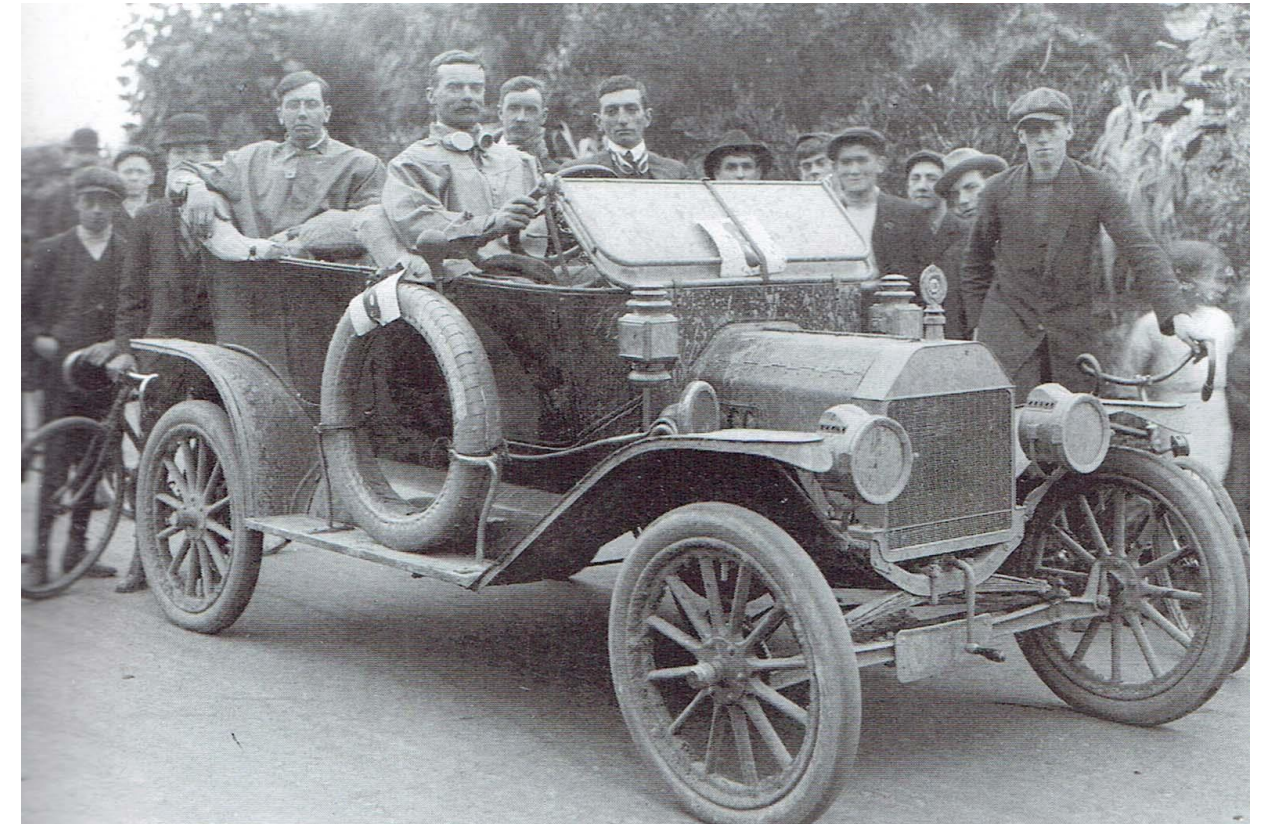
Country Agents should write for descriptive literature and terms of Agency; in some cases it is not necessary to stock a Car.

THE PROSSER AUTOMOBILE COMPANY,
 'PHONE: Central 4178—4177. **Water Street, BIRMINGHAM.**

In October 1922 he attempted to re-enter the aviation field, building a biplane glider for a long-distance soaring competition organised by the Royal Aero Club, but the glider was wrecked by a storm before it could participate, and Prosser had no chance of winning the £100 prize.

He then set up the Midland Wholesale Accessory Company, but this enterprise failed after nine months, with debts of over £1000. A third venture, manufacturing perambulators, also failed, and Prosser was declared bankrupt on 31 October 1923, owing the sum of £4579. Creditors only received 1s 7d in the pound – less than 10%.

Sydney to Melbourne, winning the event in his 20 hp tourer which returned 31.8 miles per gallon and gained full points for reliability.



Carey and the Blériot

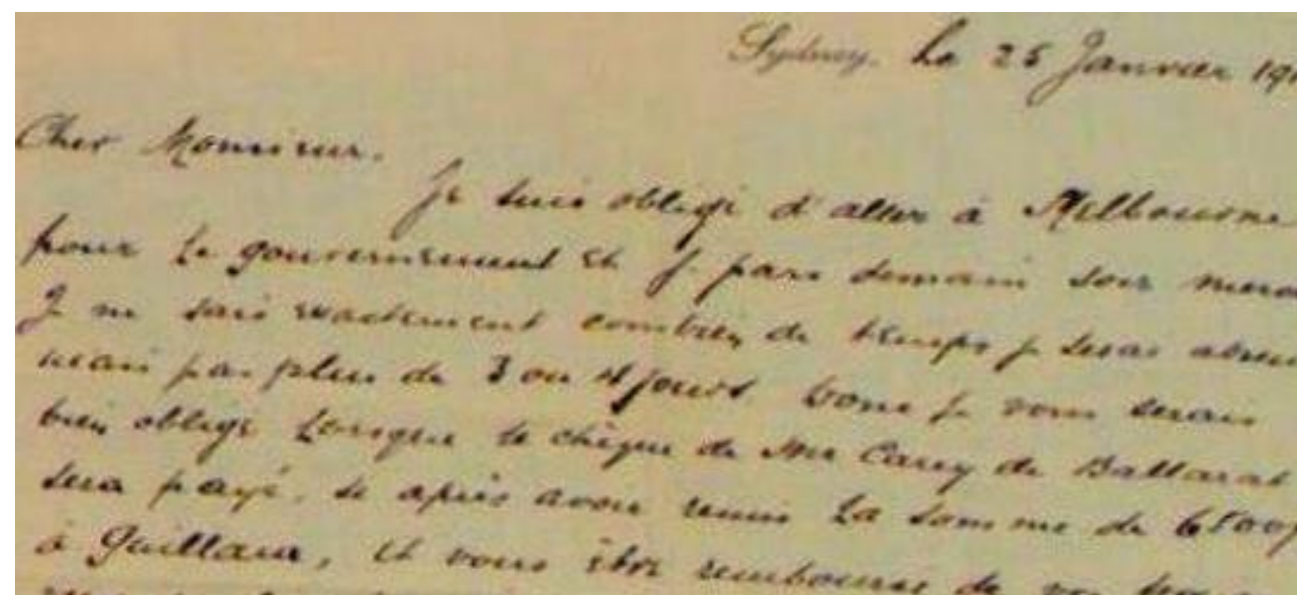
Among his many other interests, Carey was a member of the volunteer Light Horse and at the outbreak of the war was keen to take part. He was refused enlistment in the Australian Flying Corps due to his age (42), so he planned to learn to fly and try again. He was friendly with Edwin Prosser, a British pilot, who had moved to Ballarat in 1913. On pages 27 to 30 the career of this interesting person is outlined.

Aircraft were scarce, but Carey learnt that Maurice Guillaux's Blériot was still in Australia. The aircraft had crashed at a display at Ascot Racecourse, now part of Mascot (Kingsford-Smith) airport, on August 1, 1915, three days after the outbreak of the war. Guillaux was injured, but was able to walk away from the crash. Contrary to some reports, the aircraft was repaired, and on 12 September Guillaux gave his last display in Australia, at Bathurst. This was a full aerobatic

display, as per the usual Guillaux program, with the addition of a display of aerial bombing. But Guillaux was already the subject of some criticism for failing to return home to take part in the war, and sailed to Europe in the first convoy of Australian troops to be sent to the war, on 22 October.

It is not clear whether Guillaux offered his aircraft to the Australian military, either for purchase or as a donation, but it is clear that there was no requirement for such an aircraft at Point Cook. Keith Isaacs, in his book *Military Aircraft of Australia 1909-1918*, lists five Blériots that were offered to the fledgling air group, but only one was accepted. It is just as well that Guillaux's aircraft was not used at Point Cook, because none of the impressed aircraft survived the war.

Guillaux's aircraft was left in the care of the export company Messageries Maritimes, probably to be sent later, but this never happened. The transfer of ownership to Carey was made with the assistance of quite an interesting character in Australian aviation history, Jean Claude Marduel, whose story is the subject of a special section later in this booklet (page 20). With Marduel's help Guillaux settled outstanding storage charges on the Blériot, and then Marduel transmitted the sum of 6800 French Francs, received from Carey, to Guillaux in January 1916. A relevant part of Marduel's letter is below.



I, flying schools were in great demand, but he left, getting as far away from the war as possible. Interesting questions arise!

He first appears in the Australian newspapers in May 1915 as the pilot of the Sylvander-Howard biplane, built in the far western NSW town of Hay, yet another fascinating story that needs to be further examined. It was claimed that the aircraft made a flight of a mile, but at a public demonstration later it was barely able to leave the ground. Prosser left Hay and the project lapsed. He then became the expert pilot for the resuscitation of the Blériot during 1916, as mentioned on page 4.

On 20 March 1917 he is recorded as flying the so-called Andersen Biplane at Geelong, made at least in part from the aircraft of John Duigan. However, he had applied for enlistment as an officer in the 'Aviation Corps of the Australian Army' on 2 February 1917. Despite listing his employment as *Chief Pilot of Ballarat Flying School*, he eventually enlisted on 7 September, as a private. Here, his occupation was listed as 'wood worker'.

By late December he was in Britain, and was appointed to 7 Training Squadron. AFC. The task of this group was to prepare people for front-line service, largely for 3 Squadron AFC. Prosser did not reach the front: his service record indicates some periods of sickness, and two short periods of absence without leave, before being discharged from the AFC on 16 April 1919. He was permitted to leave the service in Britain because his mother still lived in Birmingham.

Apparently, he had access to even more of the family fortune, because his next venture was into car manufacture. In January 1921 he formed the Prosser Automobile Company in Birmingham. The Prosser light car came in two-seater and four-seater versions, with a 10 horsepower Coventry-Simplex motor with integrated clutch and gearbox. The car was quite well reviewed in the *Light Car and Cyclecar* magazine in July 1922 as being 'a workmanlike, durable and smart little car' and the smaller version had a good turn of speed for

Edwin Prosser



*Edwin Prosser in Wales, 1914. Picture from
http://cwmammanhistory.co.uk/Amman_Valley_History

Edwin was considerably younger than Graham Carey: he was born on 16 April 1895, in Wolverhampton, England. His story is fascinating.

His father appears to be a self-made man, beginning his working life as a stonemason. He became a manufacturer of bricks and tiles. He died in 1913, leaving the large sum of £81,900 13s 9d.

In 1910, aged 15, Edwin took up gliding, building his own machine (influenced by the designs of Octave Chanute) in partnership with one A M Bonehill. It was destroyed the following year in a storm. Edwin may have had his first powered flight training the following year, in a Blériot, but certainly he learnt to fly in 1912 at the age of 17 at the Ewen School of Aviation at Hendon, gaining his licence, No. 526, on 18 June 1913. He apparently owned his own aircraft, pictured above. The following year was giving display flights in Wales, and taking part in aerial races. In October 1914, he opened a flying school at Hendon, but sold it the next month, and was reported as going to Australia to give exhibition flights. This was at the start of World War

The Blériot was nominally a single seater, and it had been specially built as an aerobatic machine and was exceptionally difficult to fly. (After the successful Channel flight, Louis Blériot became a very successful manufacturer, and actually tested his designs in a wind tunnel. He could tailor the wing section, wing area and similar factors to meet exactly the customer's needs).

Carey's first airfield was Ballarat Common, but, following protests, he moved to Bacchus Marsh, using a 500 yard stretch of the racecourse. Prosser was his instructor: Guillaux had taken up passengers, so probably Prosser took Carey as passenger on some of his early flights. But with determination, Carey set about the task of learning to be a pilot.



An early lady passenger at Bacchus Marsh.

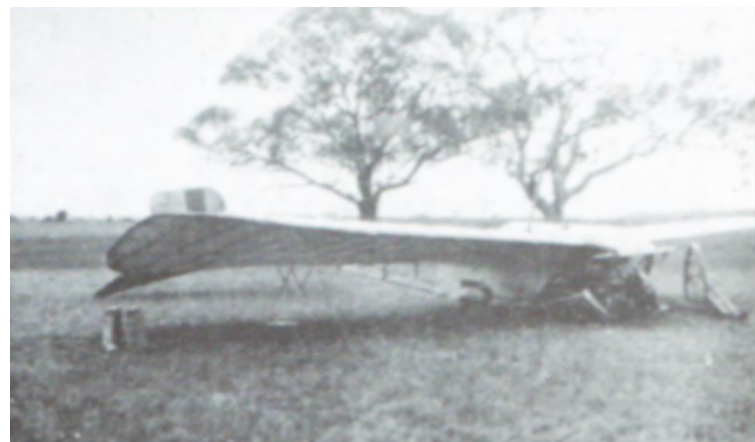
Because of the rotary engine's torque effect, it took many attempts before he was even able to taxi the aircraft in a straight line. Then he gradually increased speed, and was able to raise the tail wheel off the ground at about 40 mph. Then came longer and longer 'hops', reaching a height of about 50 feet. Finally he completed a circuit,

marred only at the landing when he hit a part of the race starting apparatus.

This was quite an amazing achievement, especially remembering that the Blériot was a very 'hot' machine for its time. After many local flights, on November 23, 1916, Carey flew to Point Cook where he was tested by the instructors. He was awarded the Australian Aero Club Aviator's Certificate, number 34. This was the first such certificate to be issued to a civilian, and it was signed by Lieutenant Eric Harrison, commander of Point Cook. Harrison was an Australian who had been deeply involved in aviation since going to England in 1912, at much the same time as Hawker.

Carey sent a letter to the Defence Department, enclosing his Aviator's Certificate, and sought again to enter the Australian Flying Corps. However he was unsuccessful, again on the grounds of his age.

Meanwhile he had extended his flying activities. He established a flying school at Ballarat, with Edwin Prosser as chief instructor. Carey later took over this post himself, so it is obvious that flying was his top priority among his many enterprises. As well as training pilots, the school gave displays, went 'barnstorming' and took part in advertising programs. Prosser performed with the Blériot at the Colac



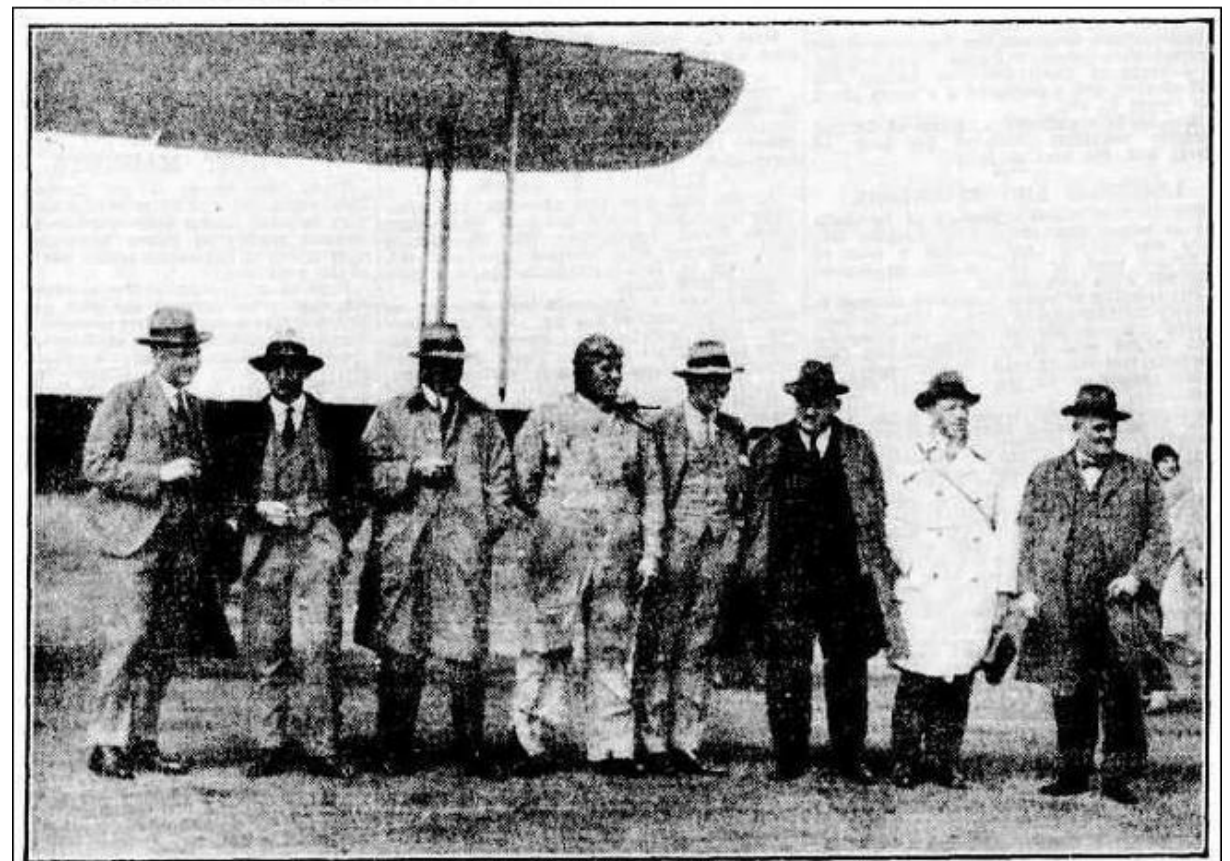
May, 1917: an eventful take-off attempt.

Prosser was far more adventurous than Carey. He performed loops and other aerobatic stunts at displays. Carey, considerably less

Regatta, on New Year's Day. This was hugely successful: trains ran from surrounding areas, bringing thousands of spectators. Profits went to war charities.

Playoust on 26 November 1926. He was prominent in the French community in Sydney, becoming President of the NSW Union Française in 1926. He was employed in various business enterprises involving trade deals between France and Australia. However, his flying days seemed to have come to an end, apart from being a passenger on a charter flight in Captain Les Holden's DH-61 Giant Moth on 17 September 1929, when a group of woolbuyers chartered the aircraft to fly from Sydney to Brisbane.

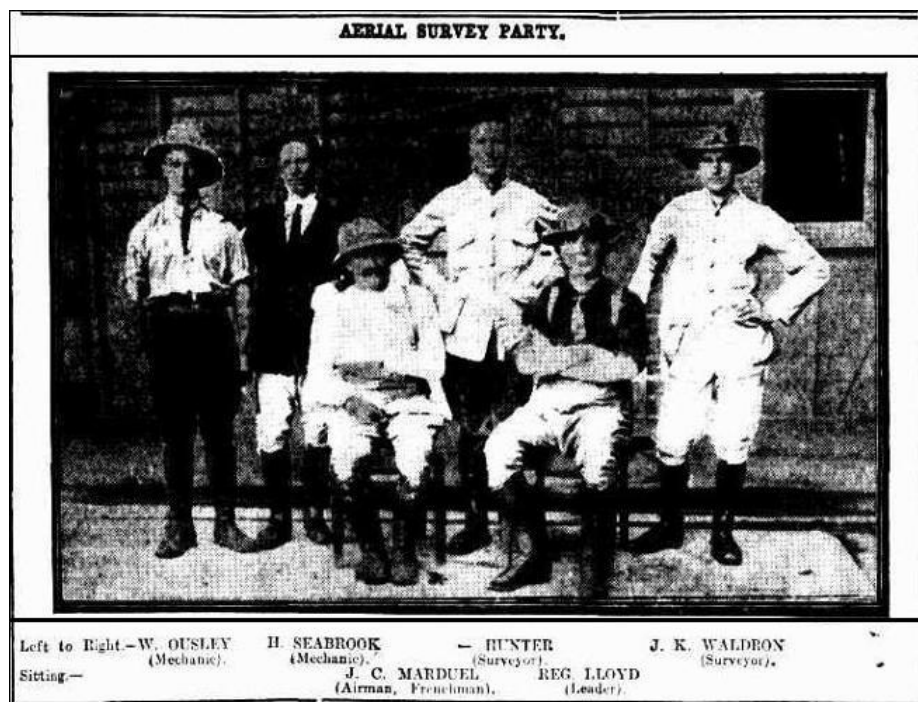
WOOLBUYERS FLY TO BRISBANE IN THE CANBERRA.



Before the departure from Mascot yesterday. Left to right: Messrs. J. Blackwell, G. Schneider, A. McGregor, Captain Holden (pilot), M. Vanzever, A. Duboe, M. Lefebvre, and J. C. Marduel.

His death in France on 10 July 1939 was widely reported in the Australian media, mainly referring to his pioneering flights in the Caudron.

His occupation was noted in his probate notice as 'wool wheedler', and he was by this time mainly concerned with the profitable business of selling wool to France.



In January 1919, plans were announced for the establishment of an airline service to Britain, and with considerable publicity, an expedition set

off on motor cycles to survey the Australian section of the route, placing airfields every 300 miles. Marduel, 'a veteran Australian flier who has seen service at the front' was in the party, as 'flying expert and in charge of motor equipment' Another report said that 'Major (sic) Marduel is wrapped up in aerial work and appears to be the right man for the vast task which is now in front of him'. After being injured in a motorbike accident near Roma, he struggled on to Camooweal. Here he became ill and returned to Sydney to travel to Darwin by boat. The survey was completed by August 2, 1919, but the ambitious airline plan never eventuated. Ross and Keith Smith's pioneering flight, leaving Britain on 11 November 1919, made no use of their work.

Marduel's interest in things mechanical obviously continued: he next made the newspapers in December 1920 when he was fined £10 with costs of £3 18s 6d for illegal storage at his home of 390 gallons of Benzine. He said that he was worried about a forecast shortage of fuel.

He was noted as attending the funeral of aviation pioneer Oswald Watt on 23 May 1921 and the funeral of French woolbuyer Rene

experienced, contented himself with more mundane flying. Prosser and Carey continued to give displays, but gradually Carey took more of the limelight.

A small, 'unofficial' air mail was carried between some towns; the mail from Mortlake and Ararat to Horsham was delayed by a rather spectacular crash at Ararat. A very successful show at Horsham was followed by a tour to Dimboola, Natimuk and Murtoa.

Carey then went to Adelaide, where his performances included Australia's third official air mail flight.....

Adelaide and the airmail flight

The Commercial Travellers Association had been a sponsor of Guillaux's 1914 Melbourne-Sydney mail flight, and were a very active social group throughout the country. They raised money for the Red Cross and the Army Nurses' Appeal, and they engaged Carey to give displays in South Australia during October and December 1917

'In a heavy gale, on Saturday 27 October, Carey flew over the Adelaide Oval where a carnival was in progress. He dropped mail..... [but] the wind carried the parachute to the Port Adelaide Railway Station nearly six miles away. During the flight, Carey bombarded the city with Enlistment and Liberty Loan leaflets..... when he went against the wind the Blériots' speed was about 40 miles per hour; with the wind it was between 90 and 100 mph'.



He moved on towards Gawler, about 50km north of Adelaide. En route he collided with some telegraph wires, requiring yet another repair and delay. He then promised to try again 'rain or shine'.

Original postcard from Mossgreen stamp catalog, online

At this stage an airmail cargo was prepared. There were 'some 100 postcards at 2/6d and 10 letters, including one from the mayor of Adelaide to the Mayor of Gawler', carried on 27 November 1917. 2/6d could be equated to about \$30 in modern money: a postage stamp cost a penny, 2 shillings and 6 pence being 30 pence.

These postcards are particularly valuable. In May 2013 the philatelic auction firm Mossgreen sold an Adelaide to Gawler card for \$1620. An even rarer card carried on the return journey, signed by Graham Carey, was sold at the same auction for \$3720. Both journeys were made in very bad weather, with high winds.

This was one of Carey's last expeditions in the Blériot. *A Message from the Clouds* suggests that this was because of shortage of spare parts. He had done very well with this old design specialist aircraft, and it was a good decision to update to something more modern.

Commemoration flights: 1957, 1967, 1992, 1997 and 2017.



Famed philatelist Nelson Eustis organised a philatelic event to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of Carey's airmail flight. No fewer than 12,651 articles were carried in a Guinea

he used his correct name, Jean Claude Marduel, gave his correct place of birth, quoted his naturalization details, and included Major Rutledge's reference. He listed his qualifications, including a B Sc from Lyon University, his proficiency in English, French and German, four years service in the French army cavalry and his service in Egypt.

His appointment as temporary lieutenant and instructor at Point Cook was 'gazetted' on 11 January, 1917.

The Age of 18 October 1917 reported that he had flown over Melbourne dropping war loan leaflets in a Farman with 'war loan' painted on the wings.

His name appeared in the *Argus* of 18 January 1918 in connection with the inquest into the death of a student at Point Cook, who had fallen to his death from his Farman aircraft on the previous 16 November. Lieutenant Marduel, his instructor, gave evidence that the victim had been progressing well as a student, and a verdict of accidental death was returned. There were many accidents causing death in these early years of aviation.

On 10 June 1918 it was reported that he had resigned from Point Cook. His successor had seen active service and had an MC, and may have had preference. Also, Marduel was in the process of a divorce, something that carried some social stigma at the time. The divorce was reported with glee, and in salacious detail, by the scandal sheet *Melbourne Truth* on 29 June.

It has also been suggested that he was tarnished by the rumour that Guillaux had been executed as a spy. This absurd story developed during November 1917, and was widely reported before finally being refuted in mid-1918. There is a report in a later newspaper article that he had to obtain another reference from Major Rutledge to counter this allegation but I have not been able to confirm this.

He was next in the news as a participant in the Arrow Melbourne-Sydney motor cycle reliability trial, riding an Excelsior.

'turned turtle' on takeoff, but Marduel and his passenger were unhurt. His aircraft was the first to be seen in Tamworth.

Shortly afterwards, he enlisted in the armed forces under the name of John Charles Marduel, giving his place of birth as Saint Helier in Jersey Island, (a part of England that is close to the French coast) to explain his French accent.

He arrived in Suez on 14 April 1916 with No 1 squadron, Australian Flying Corps, but had a rather disappointing career in Egypt. Of the 82 days he spent in Egypt, thirty were spent in hospital suffering from gout and rheumatism. He was discharged on medical grounds, but the point was made that his illness was exacerbated by the hot Egyptian climate. He was returned to Australia, but had succeeded in obtaining a reference from the squadron commander, Major Rutledge, which recommended his appointment as instructor.



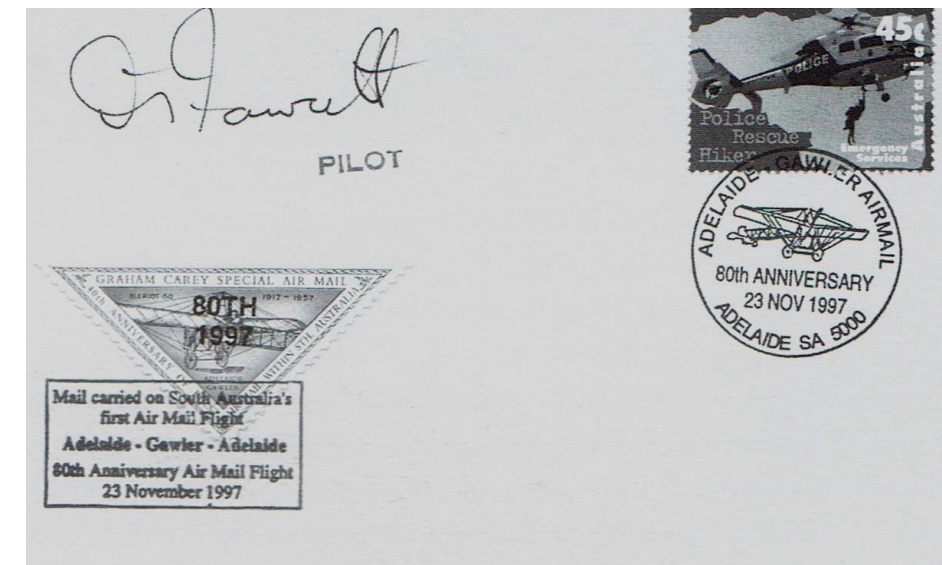
He first had to become an Australian citizen, which was achieved on 27 September 1916, and in a letter to the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, he explained his previous claim of being a British citizen on the grounds of his eagerness to enlist.

Marduel had a military bearing and looked the part as an officer candidate.

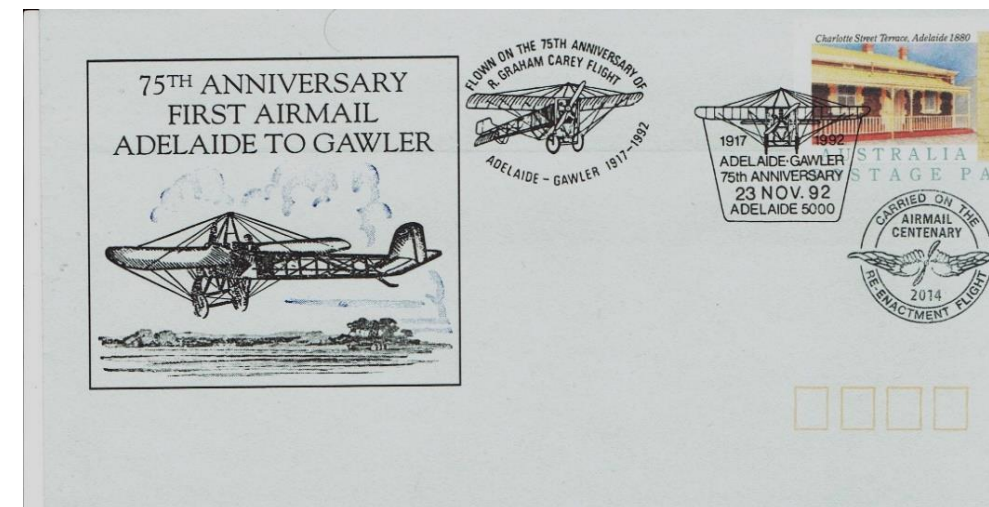
For his second application to join the armed services,

Airways DC-3. Carey himself was a passenger. At Gawler, the mail was received by Walter Nelson, who had received the original mail in 1917.

Carey died on June 5, 1959, aged 85. 'His son Perce took his place at the 50th anniversary of the South Australian flight [made by an RAAF Iroquois helicopter] and Bertha [Carey] and her daughter Edith took part in the 80th anniversary and commemoration' in 1997'.



Above: 80th anniversary envelope: Below: another commemoration flight occurred in 1992.



The following pages detail the arrangements for the centenary commemoration flight as at 7 November 2017.

THE FIRST AIRMAIL DELIVERY TO GAWLER!

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO ON 23 NOVEMBER 2017



Bitten by the flying bug, Ballarat car dealer and entrepreneur, R G (Robert Graham) Carey purchased a wrecked Bleriot XI. This aircraft had been used by Frenchman Maurice Guillaux to fly Australia's first airmail in 1914. It crashed during a demonstration flight and Guillaux left it behind when he returned to France to enlist at the onset of WW I. Such was the rapid development of flying machines at that time that it was already obsolete when Carey rebuilt it in 1917.

After obtaining the first flying licence to be issued to an Australian civilian, Carey embarked on a series of promotional flights around Western Victoria. At 42 he was too old to enlist in

the Royal Flying Corps so his contribution to the war effort was to fly his frail and under-powered Bleriot over local fairs and drop posters to raise funds and promote recruitment. In October 1917 the Commercial Travellers' Association brought Carey to Adelaide to appear at a carnival to raise money for the Army Nurses' Fund.

Arriving in Adelaide he battled a gale to fly over the city and drop leaflets promoting a war loan. Over the next few days he made several flights over Adelaide's suburbs, dropping more leaflets, until he struck a surveyor's peg when landing at his temporary airfield at Enfield and shattered a wheel. With that repaired, his next engagement was a Red Cross Carnival at Gawler. An official airmail was approved for the flight – the first in South Australia and only the third in Australia. This time it was an unseen fence wire that brought him down near Islington.

The crowd waiting at Gawler were understandably disappointed; no aeroplane had ever flown over the town before. The organisation committee had no trouble persuading Carey to complete the flight once the Bleriot had been repaired – and, on Friday 23rd November 1917, Gawler finally had its first sight of this marvel of the modern world.

Once again, Carey had to battle adverse weather to complete the flight, touching down on Gawler Racecourse at 3.30pm with a bag of commemorative postcards and letters, included those intended for the earlier attempt. These items are now amongst the most highly sought-after in Australian philately.

Vast crowds inspected his aircraft at the racecourse and the bravest accompanied Carey on joy flights over the town. On November 26, once more in a rainstorm, Carey had another miserable flight back to Adelaide in minimal visibility and battering gales carrying the return mail. This was Carey's last flight in his Bleriot.

He went on to acquire a fleet of war-surplus Maurice Farman Shorthorn biplanes and continued his round of displays, joyflights and delivery runs.

In 1957, Carey, now 83-years old and retired from flying, returned to Gawler for a 40-year Commemorative event, once more delivering a parcel of specially-franked airmail. Eighteen months later he died at his home in Melbourne.

This year a Centenary Mail has been arranged by the Australian Airmail Society and will be flown to Gawler on 23rd November by Mick Wright and Mark Michell of the Adelaide Soaring Club. A commemorative postmark will be available at the Gawler Post Office on the day. There will also be a memorial celebration at the Carey Plaque at Gawler Racecourse (adjacent to the fence on Adelaide Road) at 1.00pm – to be followed by a meal, display and presentation at the Gawler Airfield from 3.00pm.

FURTHER DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE FROM:

MARTIN WALKER (Australian Airmail Society) 0418 800 132

JOHN COUPER-SMARTT (Adelaide Soaring Club) 0439 834 441



During this long process, Marduel kept using the aircraft. By November, though not formally qualified, he was giving joy flights, as rapturously described by one of his passengers

in the Bathurst paper, *National Advocate*, on 10 November 1914. The *Daily Telegraph* on 7 November 1914 published an aerial photograph of Richmond township, taken from the Caudron, and claimed that it was the first aerial photograph published in Australia. In December 1914 he flew from Richmond to Sydney, claiming this as the longest single hop flight so far carried out in Australia. He also planned to fly to Melbourne, with Mr Begin as passenger: Begin had been the manager for Guillaux's last flying display in Australia, at Bathurst on 12 September 1914. He planned to make the journey in one day, with only one stop for fuel at Albury.

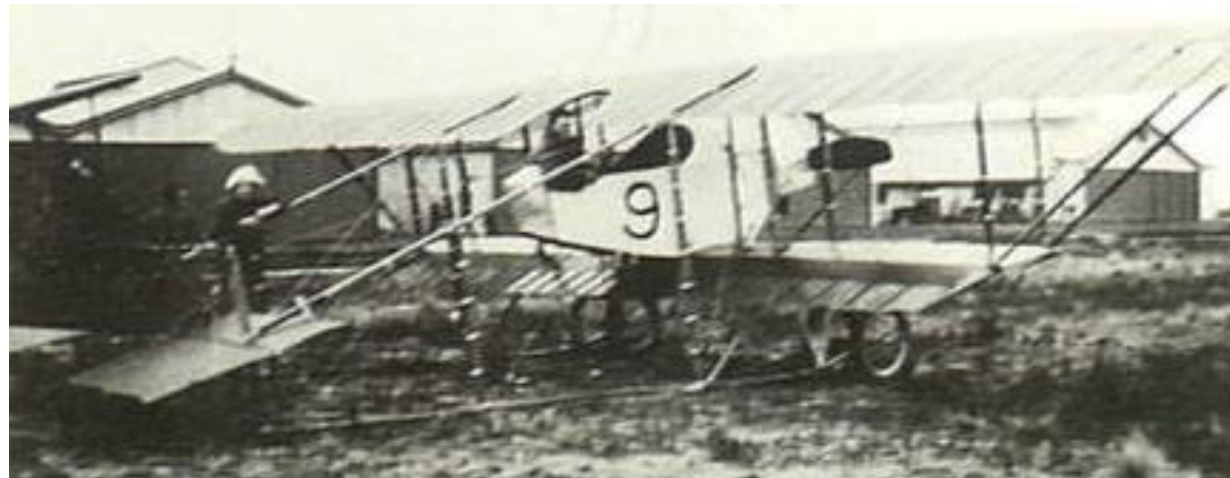
He performed at a Patriotic Carnival at the Sydney Showground on February 27, 1915, along with Delfoss Badgery, including a bomb-dropping exhibition.

In July 1915, it was reported Marduel was based at Day Street, Kensington, and he made several flights over the city. The area was also used by Delfoss Badgery for his Badgery Flier, and according to the newspapers, Badgery had assisted Marduel in maintaining the machine.

On 4 September 1915 he crashed his aircraft at Singleton, while taking off to fly to Sydney en route from Tamworth. The aircraft

the son of a former French Consul) and most probably Marduel' local knowledge was of assistance to the group. We know that in July 1914, Marduel, as representative of Guillaux, was in Richmond, arranging for the construction of a hangar for an aircraft that was being imported by Guillaux, financed by grazier Walter McConochie and Sydney wholesale butcher T A Field. Their first, and indeed only, aircraft arrived later in the year – a Caudron G III (pictured). It was assembled by Guillaux and flown from Richmond by Marduel. Marduel had flying lessons from Guillaux, but did not gain a formal licence until 16 January 1915, flying the Caudron.

Shortly after the outbreak of war, the Caudron was offered to the armed services, the initial offer being the aircraft, the services of Marduel as pilot and a collection of spare parts, for a price of £1400. The price was reduced to £1300 including the Richmond hangar, but the deal lapsed until January 1916, when T A Field offered the Caudron to the Department of Defence for £500. As the department was actually prepared to pay £950, this offer was quickly accepted!



CFS9 at Point Cook; ADF-Serials photo. AWM AO6142

The aircraft became CFS9, the ninth aircraft acquired by Point Cook. Its last flight in this role was 17 August 1916: it was said that the engine was unreliable, and the aircraft was 'struck of charge' late in 1917.

* R G CAREY GAWLER AIRMAIL CENTENARY *

TIMETABLE

Thursday 23 November 2017

TIME	ACTION	NOTES
0930	Mail from Gawler PO delivered to pilot at YGAW	Mick Wright and Mark Michell
1030	Centenary Flight departs YGAW for YPFD	
1045	Centenary Flight arrives YPFD	
1100	General Public mail bag delivered to YPFD	Mail bags handed to pilot
1115	Flight departs YPFD to return to YGAW	
1130 approx	Overfly Racecourse <i>en route</i> YPFD - YGAW	
1145	Centenary Flight arrives at YGAW	
1200	Veteran car carries airmail bags to Gawler Racecourse	
1300	Ceremony at Racecourse	Welcome by G&B J C Introduction by Martin Walker Speech by Mayor Karen Redman Unveiling of sign by Tony Piccolo MP Signing of Airmail and Postcards
1345	Veteran car departs to carry airmail to Gawler Post Office	
1400	All depart for Adelaide Soaring Club, Gawler Belt Road	
1430	Open Hangars and Display at Gawler Airfield	
1500	Afternoon Tea (Bookings essential) Bar Open Airmail Souvenirs available for purchase	
1600 - 1730	Illustrated Presentation: <i>The Adventures of R G Carey</i> by Martin Walker	



For Further Details and Bookings

CONTACT

JOHN COUPER-SMARTT

0439 834 441

Later history of the Blériot

According to *A Message from the Clouds* 'the records show that on February 24 1926 the Blériot was sold to Edwin Prosser, who had returned to Australia and was then living at Wentworth. On March 9 of that year Prosser crashed at Tamworth and Carey repossessed the aircraft 'in somewhat bent condition'.

The Blériot was subsequently sold to K J Chaffey, a grazier, of 'Yarrandale', Deniliquin. Chaffey had been a pupil of Carey's. There is some doubt about whether Chaffey ever flew the aircraft at Deniliquin. In December 1935 Chaffey wrote to the Defence Department, outlining the story of the aircraft and offering it to the Department as a piece of historical memorabilia. There was interest in preserving it in a proposed collection based around Kingsford-Smith's famous Southern Cross.

By this time, the aircraft was completely dismantled. The machine was assessed by one J D Jarman of the Defence Department, reporting on September 26, 1936. *A Message from the Clouds* summarises the report: 'The wings and tail unit, in fairly good condition, were kept in a tin shed. The fuselage, for all that it had a few cracks and some weather deterioration, could be repaired and was out under a tree in the yard. The back plate (engine mounting) was cracked and rusted, but could easily be repaired. The dismantled engine seemed to be all right and kept on the verandah covered by chaff bags'.

Jarman recommended the purchase of the aircraft and eventually on January 9 1937, £25 was paid and the machine was sent to Mascot Aerodrome for storage, awaiting the erection of the Southern Cross memorial, which did not eventuate.

On May 14, 1941, Arthur Penfold, curator of the Sydney Technological Museum, (now known as the Museum of Arts and Sciences) asked for the machine to be transferred to his care. This

Marduel, Prosser and Treloar

These three interesting characters have largely been ignored in the wider history of Australian aviation. While describing their interactions with Carey, the opportunity is taken to tell their story in slightly more detail ...

Jean Claude Marduel



A rare photo of Marduel flying the Caudron GIII from Richmond.

Jean Claude Marduel was born in Lyon, France in November 1877. He migrated to the USA in 1900, married and had a daughter born in 1902. He arrived in Australia in May 1908, and became Principal of the Berlitz school of languages in Sydney. This fashionable school was widely advertised.

In late 1910 he took part in a motorcycle reliability trial from Melbourne to Sydney. There were 19 starters, but only eight finished: Marduel dropped out at Albury.

In 1910 he was associated with the floating of a company that provided hire cars to take people to Jenolan Caves, promising a profit of £35 a week.

There is no record of how he became involved with Maurice Guillaux, who arrived in Sydney on 8 April 1914. Guillaux spoke little English, but his associate Lucien Maistre had been in Australia before (he was



Even longer expeditions were later undertaken, eg for Palm cars and Cubitt cars, and for Velvet Soap. The Palm was a rebadged Canadian-built Ford Model T. The Palm promotion tours involved visits to 173 places, from Melbourne suburbs as far north as Narrandera, mighty achievements when it is considered that the Carey had to find his own landing places, and fuel and oil had to be specially arranged. The Palm sales team always had two cars waiting at each

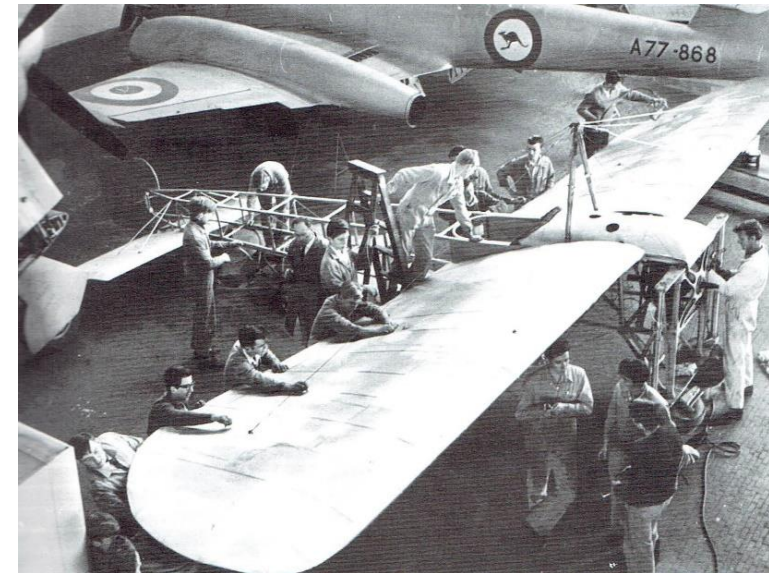
stop.

Carey maintained his interest in cars and taxis. He was very involved in the marketing of the British Cubitt car, of roughly similar specifications to the Model T, but it could not compete.

Throughout his life, Carey was involved in many enterprises, not only in advertising and the automobile industry. He was very active in civic affairs such as Scouting. But in 1928 there was a downturn in the aviation business, and he was forced to make ends meet by such activities as engine overhauls in his own home. He was not wealthy, but his life experience was amazing.

On May 12, 1937, at the Coronation Motor Show, Carey flew one of his Farmans for the last time, being billed as 'The Oldest Plane in Australia.... Flown by the Oldest Airman in the World' (he was 63). As mentioned on page 7 Carey was a passenger in the DC-3 that conducted the 1957 re-enactment, carrying an amazing 12,651 mail items. He died in 1959, aged 84.

This brief treatment does not do justice to this remarkable man, but perhaps his best memorial is the restored Farman, in its livery as CFS-20, at Point Cook. VH-UBC is also preserved in the Canadian Aerospace Museum at Ottawa.



was agreed, and students of Sydney Technical College carried out a first restoration, manufacturing many new parts in the process (*left*). It was displayed at Mascot for the airmail commemoration flight

of 1964 and is now preserved at the Powerhouse Museum, the main site for the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences.

The Blériot can claim to be about the fourth most significant pre-World War I aircraft still preserved. The first is undoubtedly the Wright Flyer, preserved in the Smithsonian. The second is Blériot's cross-channel aircraft, preserved in Paris. Italy holds another Blériot, remarkable for being the first aircraft to be used for bombing in wartime. But Guillaux's Blériot also has a remarkable history, and thus, great significance.



Carey: the later flying adventures

Carey's aviation company

Though the use of the Blériot had declined, Cary had still great interest in aviation. In 1919, with the financial backing of businessman Arthur Fenton, the Mayor of Essendon, he set up a new home and flying headquarters adjoining the Port Melbourne rifle range. A church hall was transported to the site and became a combination dwelling and aircraft facility: the front section was the clubroom and office of the Melbourne Air Service. This was one of the first commercial enterprises in the area of Fishermens Bend, which developed into a major industrial area, home, for example, to General Motors Holden.



The 'Careydrome' combined residence, clubhouse and airfield office. Some partitions were actually wings of the Farmans wrecked in the storm of 11 August.

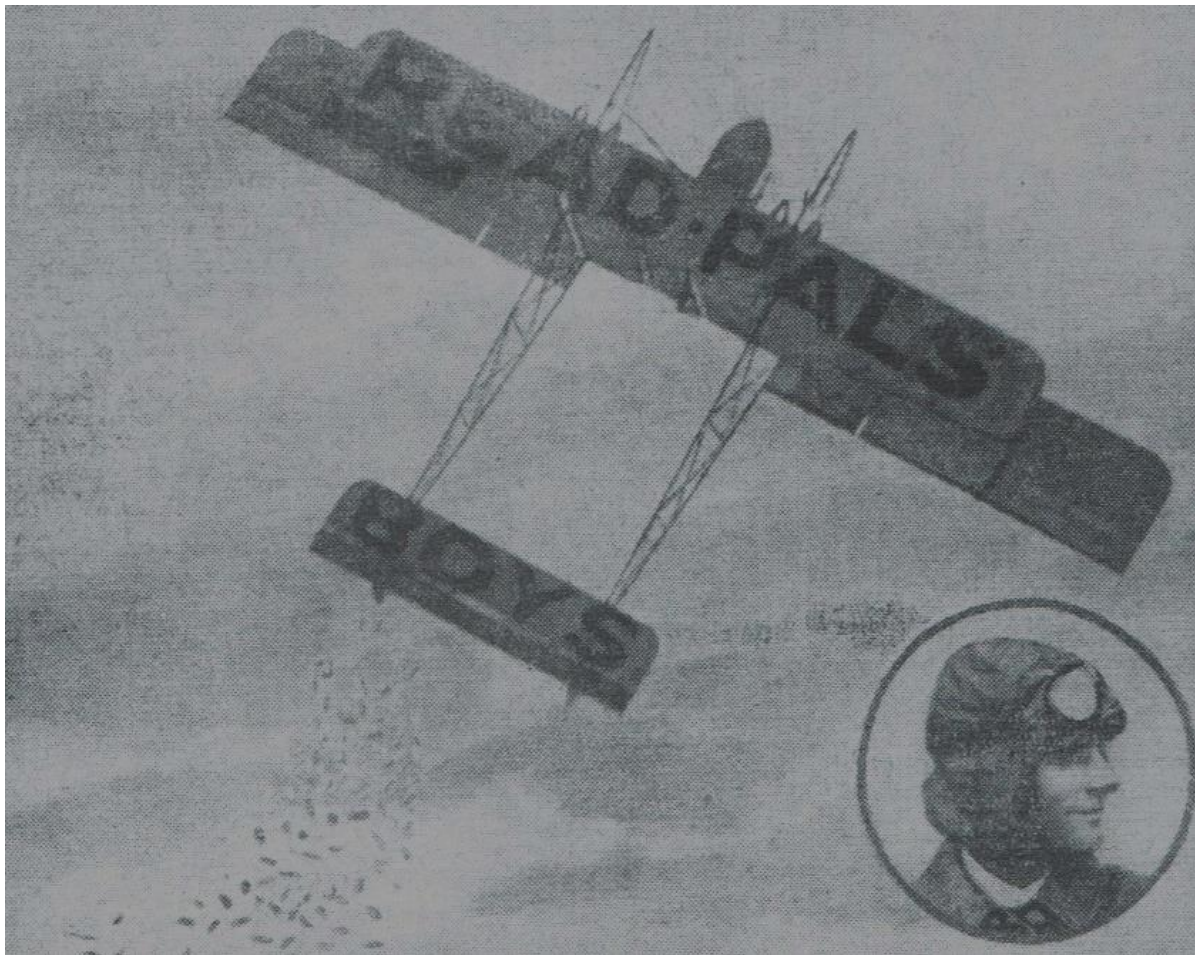


Mrs Carey and her 19-year old daughter Masie had the less glamorous, but more arduous, task of supplying ground support from a Model T Ford panel van. At this time cars were rare in rural areas, and roads were simply unmapped tracks through farms. There were innumerable gates to be opened and closed. They often had to negotiate creek crossings and the dreaded wet black-soil plains. A daily stage of 130 miles (200 km) was a mighty achievement.



The van was loaded 'up to its chin with guns, revolvers, water bottles, oilskins, leggings and umpteen portmanteaux and ladies' paraphernalia too numerous to mention, to say nothing of the excess baggage from the aircraft'. Mrs Carey kept a record of the expedition – over 2500 miles were covered, and about 500 passengers were carried on joy flights. They were enthusiastically received at each town.

Messages from the Clouds



Late in 1920, *The Herald and Weekly Times* launched the *Pals* boys magazine, and Melbourne Air Service set out on a promotional tour. This set a pattern for future such enterprises.

The underside of the wings and tailplane of the aircraft were painted with the advertising message, the aircraft flew over town and dropped advertising pamphlets, then the aircraft would land and joy flights would be offered.

This first expedition visited 26 Victorian and New South Wales towns, reaching as far as Forbes in New South Wales. For many of the townships, this was the first aircraft to be seen. Graham Carey spoke to school audiences and civic organisations, emphasizing the coming importance of air travel.



His aircraft were purchased from the Government, being surplus to the requirements of the Central Flying School at Point Cook. The school had acquired about 27 aircraft during the war. Relatively late in the process, four Maurice Farman Shorthorns and some DH 6s were acquired, but in 1919 the Imperial Gift of 100 aircraft from the UK was announced and there was no need for the older aircraft. Two DH-6s were offered for sale at £1800 each and four Shorthorns at £1500 each. They did not sell at this price, but eventually the DH-6s were sold, and Carey, a good negotiator in such matters, acquired the Shorthorns for £400 each, including flying lessons and many spare parts. In actual fact, the Royal Australian Air Force was in the doldrums until about 1921, and Carey's activities gained a lot of attention.

W H Treloar of the CFS was the instructor. His story is itself amazing – he was a veteran of the Mesopotamia 'half-flight' whose story is told on pages 31-2. He was, however, involved in helping Carey set up his base at Port Melbourne. The four aircraft were flown in on Saturday August 11, 1919, but immediately were all damaged in a huge gale. Only two aircraft were repaired. When registration of aircraft was

introduced in 1920, using the registration letters G-AU as prefix, the aircraft were registered as G-AUBC and G-AUCW.

This was the beginning of an aerial enterprise that lasted until 1933

An early activity was aerial photography. William Herbert Hansom, probably better known at the time by his *nom de plume* 'Airspy' became well known for his aerial photos, which appeared regularly in the Melbourne journals.

The photo of one of Carey's Farmans, and the area of Port Melbourne, 1921, are examples of his work.



Australia's first chartered commercial flight took place on Thursday, July 17, 1919. 'The Dodge Motor Company of America contracted Melbourne Air



Service to fly their factory representative, E C Williams, then on a world tour for the company, to Bendigo for a conference with their Victorian agents, Messrs Rickard Bros., in that city. 'Pilot Carey took off in his No 19 Farman at 9 30 am from Port Melbourne and landed at Bendigo at 11 15 am. Mr Williams was then tendered a civic reception by the Mayor and Citizens before attending to his business and enjoying an official luncheon. Takeoff was at 3 45 pm and flying between 2000 and 5000 feet and without pushing the machine Carey touched down at 5 05 pm'. This was front page news. Mr Williams was very impressed, and foretold a great future for aircraft in Australia.



Joy flights were a major activity of Melbourne Air Services. Passengers were presented with an elaborate Flight Certificate, encouraging them to learn to fly at the Melbourne School of Flying, which of course was the Melbourne Air Services itself. But the main business of Melbourne Air

Service was advertising, at which Carey excelled.