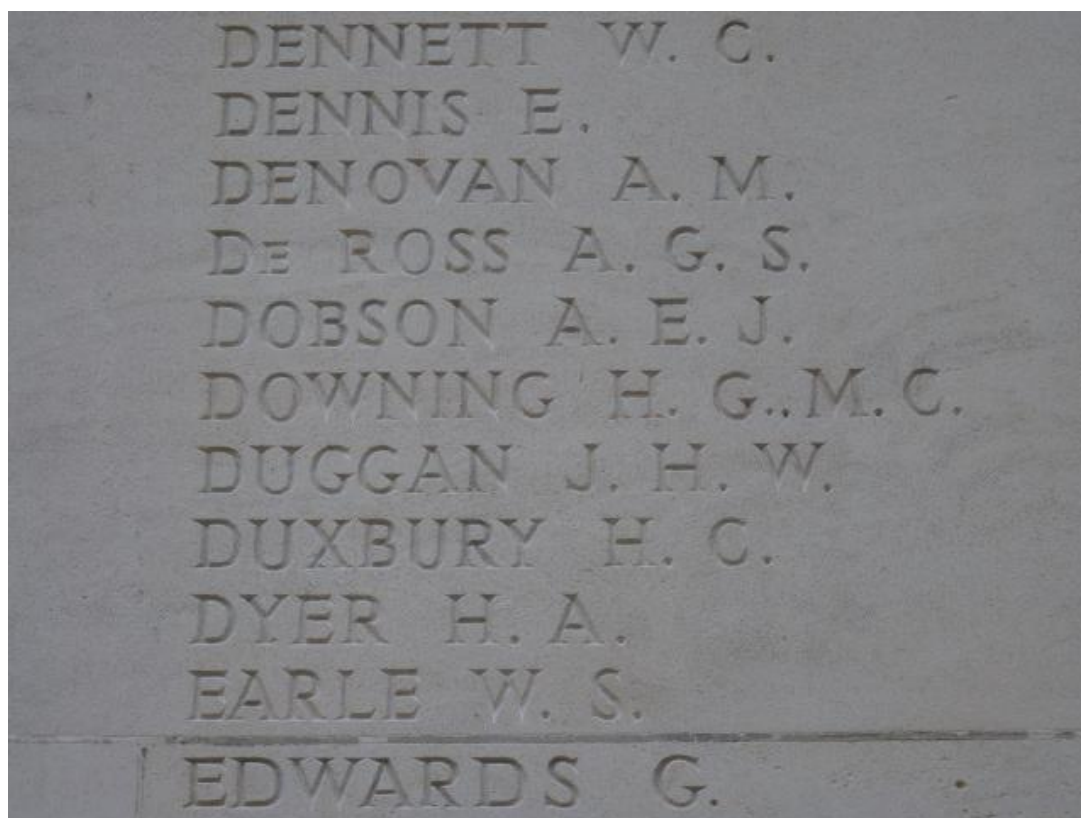


HERBERT GEORGE DOWNING MC (1905-08)

Date of Birth	13 December 1892 in France
School Information	Brother of Richard Leslie Downing (1905-07) who also died in WW1.
Career Information	None
Date Of Death	6 November 1917
Cause of Death	Killed in action
Location	Arras, France
Cemetery	Faubourg D'Amiens, Flying Service Memorial, Arras, France
Rank	Second Lieutenant
Branch of Service	29 th Squadron, Royal Flying Corps

He won his Military Cross on 18 June 1917 "For consistent skill and gallantry as an observer. On one occasion when on patrol, by holding his fire until within very short range and by skillful operation with his pilot, he succeeded in shooting down two hostile machines".

In October 2014 there was an OF visit to his grave





Arras Flying Services Memorial



In the central courtyard of the Arras Memorial is the Memorial to the Flying Services, which commemorates by name almost 1,000 Commonwealth airmen of the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service, and the Royal Air Force, who died on the Western Front and lost to enemy gun, falling from aerial, Commonwealth airmen and representing many units that took to the air in all manner of theatres, from battles in Belgium, reconnaissance aerial, and courier flights. The memorial was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, and unveiled by Sir William Airey Dix, and was unveiled by Lord Hugh Fitzhugh, Master of the Royal Air Force, on 31 July 1932.



The Air War on the Western Front

History lessons read in an alley in the courtyard of war. The Royal Air Force, the Royal Flying Corps in 1912, and the Royal Naval Air Service in 1914, with aeroplanes that were available, expensive and fragile, in the earliest battle air war. This was a tactical reconnaissance, but as the tactical use of the Western Front was formed, observation for artillery became crucial. Tactical balloons were used to observe the enemy's positions and observers in balloons reported back through rudimentary radio and, before the advent of the ground. The development of aerial photography provided a vital view of enemy lines from above.

Memorials to the air war were erected in the courtyard of the Arras Memorial, and were begun in 1919.

and attack their positions, with aerial machine guns and 750 bombs. In the summer of 1915, the German manufacturer Zeppelin put forward a French design, resulting from a meeting with the Germans. This advantage resulted in other airmen referred to as the 'Fokker scourge' in early 1916, and Allied technology matched the advance.

During the Summer offensive, Commonwealth pilots sought to fight their way across the Western Front, and were shot down in the trenches, and more than 80 of those commemorated on this

memorial were lost between July and November 1916. In the Spring of 1917, during the Battle of Arras, with significant and successful losses between German fighter groups, British air units were forced to fly over the Western Front. Many of those who had survived the previous year. Nearly 50 of those killed in the memorial were killed at Arras itself, and more than 100 over the course of the year. Eventually, advances in design and industrial production created new aircraft, including the S.E.5a, the Sopwith Camel, and the Fokker D.VII, which helped to give Commonwealth pilots a tactical and technological advantage over their German counterparts.

In April 1918, the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service merged to create a new Royal Air Force. By this time, the battle in the air was being fought increasingly by advanced aeroplanes operating in large formations, and the RAF eventually grew to over 4,000 aircraft by 1918, and over 100,000 personnel. Although their primary role throughout the war was to support ground forces, pilots on both sides increasingly used tactics and weapons to attack supply lines, industrial facilities, and civilians. The majority of those killed on the memorial—more than 300 airmen—were shot down in the final year of the conflict, and the intense losses of a single month resulted from a series of September 1918, when more than 70 airmen were missing.

Fighter units were put to rest in cemeteries on the length of the air war that was physically and psychologically demanding, and

Some of the largest aerial sites had been constructed. Flying was among the most dangerous forms of service, and half of all Commonwealth pilots had become casualties by the war's end.



Aerial reconnaissance over the Western Front, 1918.

Aerial reconnaissance over the Western Front, 1918.

Aerial reconnaissance over the Western Front, 1918.

Aerial reconnaissance over the Western Front, 1918.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commission is responsible for the commemoration of about 1,700,000 members of the Commonwealth forces who gave their lives in the two world wars. The graves and memorials of those men and women who came from all parts of the Commonwealth and other areas of many lands and of times, are found around the globe in 155 countries. For more information about the Commission, our work and how to visit our website, please visit www.cwgc.org. You may also write to our office: CWGC Head Office, Tel: +44 (0) 148 387300. Email: casualty@cwgc.org, CWGC.Head.Office, Tel: +33 (0) 21 21 27 98. E-mail: knox.a@cwgc.org

For more information about the memorial and more of those commemorated here, visit the CWGC website.

